



GILDED GODS

GILDED EMPIRE SERIES BOOK ONE

JILLIAN FROST

GILDED GODS

Gilded Empire Duet

Book 1

JILLIAN FROST

Also by Jillian Frost

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Chapter One

OPHELIA

MALE VOICES WAKE ME FROM A PLEASANT DREAM. AND NOT *that* kind of dream. Though, a girl can wish. I glance at the clock with one eye open, the sleeping pills making it harder to raise my head off the pillow. It's after seven-thirty. Dad went out hours ago and said he would return by eight with dinner.

But it's not him downstairs.

There's too much noise, so I jump out of bed. My dad has a lot of enemies, which makes them mine. So I grab the Glock from my nightstand and creep into the hallway. As I inch down the grand staircase, I take the steps two at a time, quiet as a mouse.

My father taught me how to shoot before I got my period. In our line of work, you learn how to defend yourself or die. It's that simple. And this isn't the first time greedy assholes have broken into my house to get revenge on my father.

It won't be the last.

Loud, deep voices travel down the long hallway, spilling out from the sitting room. I catch a faint whiff of weed and grit my teeth. They have some nerve. My father would rip their heads from their bodies if he were home.

I poke my head into the sitting room and take in the scenery. Three black-haired men lounge on the sectional couch, blasting rock music from the flat-screen television. They have the same Roman noses, chiseled jaws, and thick heads of black hair. Mid-twenties and gorgeous, they have

flawless olive skin, perfect smiles, and straight, white teeth, all three tall and muscular.

The Demetriou brothers.

What are they doing here?

Ares, the oldest of the brothers, smokes a blunt to my left, wearing a black suit that clings to his arms and muscular chest as if sewn onto his body. His tattoos aren't fully visible, but dark ink creeps out from his dress shirt and sleeves. At the center of the couch, Apollo, the second oldest, tips a bottle of vodka to his lips. He's dressed impeccably and, unlike his brothers, has no tattoos I can see.

On the cushion beside him, his twin, Atlas, kicks his feet up on *my* coffee table as if he owns the place. He's got a leather sketchbook on his lap, drawing with a charcoal pencil.

My dad would have told me if we were having guests. I haven't seen the Demetriou brothers since my mother's funeral. Their mother was my mom's best friend and was always around in the final days. But I haven't seen much of her since and even less of her sons.

Clutching the Glock at my side, I enter the room. "What the fuck are you doing in my house smoking weed in my living room?"

Ares stamps the blunt in the ashtray and hops up from the couch. His face looks like it was sculpted by hand to ensure flawless detail. "Calm down, little dragon."

Drakos means dragon in Greek. Ares has been calling me little dragon since we were kids. Back then, he was—and still is—the epitome of perfection, while I was always the slightly overweight girl with boobs too big for her body.

I move toward him without wavering. "You're trespassing on my property, which gives me the right to shoot you."

He cautiously approaches me and smells like he's just gotten out of the shower despite the scent of weed smoke lingering in the air. "Take it easy. We're not going to hurt you."

“Well, I’ll hurt *you* if you don’t leave my house.”

Apollo stands and turns off the television, plunging the room into silence. He gives me a mischievous grin that immediately makes me mistrust him. “We live here, killer. So why don’t you lower the gun?”

I snarl at his words. “You don’t live here.” I point the gun at his balls. “So unless you want to lose your favorite body part, I suggest you get out.”

Atlas pushes himself up from the couch and laughs. “She’s still feisty.”

Except for my mother’s funeral, I hadn’t seen much of them for years. The brothers own businesses on the South Side of Beacon Bay. I only venture to that side of town for work and rush home to safety with my bodyguard.

Ares cocks his head to the side, studying me. “Didn’t your dad tell you we were moving in today?”

I stand in front of the coffee table and size them up. “No, he failed to mention it.”

Ares plops back down on the couch as if my lowering of the gun is permanent when I haven’t decided what to do with them.

Arrogant asshole.

“I can change my mind any second and blow off your dick,” I tell him, wiping the grin from his face. His legs are spread, with his hand resting on his thigh, and I can see without getting too close that he’s got something down there worth losing. “So I wouldn’t get too cozy.”

Before he can reply with a stupid retort, the front door slams, and heels click on the tiled floor.

Wonderful.

My father brought another woman home instead of the dinner he promised me. He hasn’t been the same since my mother’s death six months ago. His grief has overshadowed mine. And some days, he forgets I live here.

Forgets I exist.

We used to be a team. But he's chosen to heal his heartache for two months with one-night stands. I hear the familiar clicking of heels on the floor at night. And then again in the morning when they leave. Thankfully, I haven't met any of them.

My dad is only forty-five, good-looking, and rich. So naturally, he has women throwing themselves at him.

"Oh, I see the four of you have gotten reacquainted." I spin around to look at Athena Demetriou as she claps her hands together, smiling. "Good. I was hoping this wouldn't be uncomfortable."

Athena's husband was gunned down on the street, right outside my father's club, a month before my mother's passing. Adrian Demetriou was my father's best friend and business partner until they parted ways over a financial discrepancy. My dad and uncle accused Adrian of stealing, even though he swore it wasn't him.

I haven't seen much of the Demetriou brothers since then. They spent a lot of time at my house when we were kids. Back then, Atlas had braces. Apollo was tall but skinny and hadn't completely grown into his height. And Ares was as perfect as the Greek god he was named after. Except he had a bad attitude and got into a lot of trouble.

Not much has changed with Ares.

"Uncomfortable?" Ares snorts with laughter, aiming his honey-brown eyes at his mother. "Ophelia almost shot off my dick. I think we're past the awkward stage of this fucked up arrangement."

"Language," his mom hisses. "I hate when you speak like that. And don't say the d-word."

He rolls his eyes. "C'mon, Ma. Stop being such a prude. Would you rather I say penis?"

Athena cringes. "Ares, I would rather you not talk about your body parts in front of ladies. It's rude and disrespectful."

“I guess I should say vagina instead of pussy,” he says with a sly grin. “Duly noted.”

Athena angles her body and wraps one arm around me. “I’m so sorry about him, my dear. You have my sincerest apologies.” She brushes the hair out of my eyes and inspects my face. “How are you doing?”

“Okay, I guess.” I hug her, confused about why she’s here with her sons. “Still working through some things.”

Dad stands in the entryway, watching us with a rare smile. “I got your favorite. Moussaka from Mykonos.”

He only orders from my favorite Greek restaurant when he wants to butter me up. I haven’t eaten moussaka since Mom died, so this must be an apology dinner for whatever the hell is happening with the Demetrious.

Are they on the run and need someplace to live?

“What’s going on?” I ask my dad, then tip my head toward the couch. “Why are *they* here?”

“I offered to let the boys stay with us.” He shrugs, clutching the bags from Mykonos that smell delicious. “They’re going to be family, after all.”

Family?

What the fuck?

Chapter Two

OPHELIA

I BLINK A FEW TIMES TO CLEAR THE BLACK SPOTS FROM MY eyes. For a moment, I think I'll pass out as the room spins around me. But before I do, I regain my senses.

“Please tell me I'm hallucinating. Or losing my mind.” I narrow my eyes at my dad, confident he misspoke. “I could have sworn you just said they're going to be our family.”

“I did,” Dad says with a smile that reaches his brown eyes. “I was going to tell you over dinner, but what the hell?” He puts the bags on the floor and lifts Athena's hand. “I asked Athena to marry me.” He shows me the massive diamond ring that glitters when the fluorescent lights hit it just right. “The wedding is at the end of the month.”

My blood feels like it's boiling in my veins. Athena smiles, but it looks forced. She can see this news upsets me, considering she was my mother's friend.

Her best fucking friend!

“No.” I gasp, my body trembling from the rage swirling inside me. My palm is suddenly itchy, begging to pick up the gun and put them and myself out of misery. “Like it's not bad enough you've been bringing home girls from your clubs for the past few months. And now, you're marrying Mom's best friend? Are you kidding me, Dad? How could you do this to her?”

Athena was always around when Mom was sick. She helped the in-home staff tend to her every need. But I didn't

realize she also cared for my father's needs.

"Phe." Dad steps forward to touch my arm, but I recoil, taking a few steps backward and out of his grasp. "You have to understand what it's been like for me losing your mom. Athena is not here to replace her. And I haven't been bringing home other women. It's been Athena all this time."

I look at Athena. "You were my mom's best friend. How long were you screwing her husband behind her back?"

"I don't like your tone or language, Ophelia. Please don't speak to me with that dirty mouth. You sound like my sons."

Athena has never liked cursing or sexual innuendo. One day when she was at my mother's side, she overheard my dad's men in the hallway talking about women they screwed. I'm used to it and don't care. Men are pigs. But she insisted my dad fire them for being so *crass*.

Her words, not mine.

Two days later, those men were replaced by new ones. I should have seen it back then. Was the writing on the wall? Was my dad sneaking around behind my mom's back?

"You're upsetting Athena," Dad interjects. "Stop acting like a child, Ophelia."

I roll my eyes. "She's upset? Please. Spare me, Dad. And since when do you care how I talk or what I do? When was the last time we even saw each other? I could have been in here getting gang-banged by every man in town, and you wouldn't have noticed."

"I'm down for that," Ares mutters.

Atlas grunts his approval.

"Boys," Athena groans. "Manners, please. Ophelia is going to be your sister."

"Stepsister," Ares corrects with heat in his eyes. "It's not like she's related to us."

"That's hardly the point," Athena snaps at her oldest son before angling her body to look at me. "Sweetheart, we didn't

want you to find out this way. And your dad is right. I will never replace your mom.”

I shake my head in disgust. “Damn right, you won’t!”

“Ophelia,” Dad snaps, his eyes wide with anger. “Stop talking to my fiancée with such disrespect. We thought you’d be happy to have a family again.”

“Family?” I laugh in his face before looking at the three hot assholes on my couch. “Like I want *them* to be part of this family?”

“Aww, c’mon, sis.” Ares runs a hand through his silky black hair. “Don’t you want to get to know your big brothers?” He waggles his eyebrows at me. “We’re going to be family. And we like to share.”

Oh my God.

He glances at his brothers when he says the word *share*. Creepy grins tug at their mouths like they’re about to laugh at a private joke.

“I’m not your sis, *bro*.”

“See, I think she’s getting the hang of it,” Ares says to his brothers. “Our little sis is such a spitfire.”

Annoyed, I head for the exit, speaking with my back to my father. “I’m out of here. Fuck this shit.”

“If you want to continue managing Olympus,” Dad shouts, “you’ll stay and eat dinner with us. But if you walk out that door, Ophelia, I will wash my hands of you.”

Olympus is my dad’s highest-earning nightclub. He put me in control of it after graduating high school, and it’s been the only thing keeping me going since Mom died. Being a boss in my own right has given me purpose.

I need that club.

It’s my life force.

I spin around to face him. “You wouldn’t.”

“I don’t want to disown you.” His eyebrows knit together as if he’s struggling with this decision. “But I will.”

I point my finger at Athena. “Because of her? I’m your daughter. Your flesh and blood. She’s some home-wrecker who took advantage of you while your wife died.”

“I’m sick of your princess attitude,” Ares interjects. “Apologize to our mother. Now!”

I blow out a deep breath and ignore him.

With my teeth gritted, my gaze lands on my dad. “And here, I thought you were different. But I guess all men only ever think with their dicks.”

I don’t wait for him to answer and race upstairs, my feet moving so quickly that the soles of my shoes feel like they’re on fire. Every part of my body burns from the adrenaline coursing through me.

“Ophelia,” Dad calls out from the ground floor.

Screw him.

I don’t waste time and stuff clothes, toiletries, and a few things into a backpack. My bodyguard will let me crash at his place until I figure out what to do with my life. And with the size of my trust fund, I can buy my own club.

I don’t need him.

My dad and his new family are still in the sitting room when I head downstairs, adjusting the bag’s strap over my shoulder.

Everyone stops talking.

They stare at me.

Ares cradles his mother in his arms like a newborn baby, dabbing at her tears with a silk handkerchief that matches his tie, but his eyes never leave mine.

He glares at me.

I roll my eyes.

Fuck him.

And this *family*.

He releases his grip on his mother and steps out of the room, blocking my path to the front door. Because of his size, I can't get around him. Not with all of the muscle bulging out from beneath his suit jacket.

“Get out of my way, Ares.”

He dips his head down so he's almost at my height, and our eyes connect. “Listen up, you little brat, because I won't repeat myself. If you don't march your entitled ass back into that room and apologize to my mother, I will make your life a living hell.”

“Your threats mean nothing to me.” I reach into my back pocket and grab the Glock from my waistband, jamming the barrel into his stomach. “Now, if you don't move *your* ass out of *my* way, I will put a bullet in your kidney. You do the math, Ares. At this close of a range, that gives you maybe a five percent chance of survival if you're lucky.”

“This isn't over.” He steps to the side, teeth bared. “I'll find you, little dragon. And when I do, your mouthy ass is mine.”

Chapter Three

ARES

ONE DAY, I WILL WRAP MY HANDS AROUND HER THROAT AND squeeze the fucking life from her body. This little bitch thinks she can mess with me. She's fucking with the wrong man.

With the barrel of a Glock jammed into my stomach, I don't have any choice but to let her go. I can tell by the murderous look in her eyes that she'll pull the trigger. This is a girl who takes action. Otherwise, Belen wouldn't have let her manage his most profitable club.

"This isn't over," I tell her, stepping away from the door. "I'll find you, little dragon. And when I do, your mouthy ass is mine."

Ophelia lowers the gun and smirks. "I'm not afraid of you."

"You should be," I snap at her.

Ophelia stares at me like she's trying to size me up. I have never met a woman so formidable.

It's sexy as hell.

Ophelia wasn't this hot a few years ago. She's grown into her body... and what a fucking body. She's thick in all the right places, with a big ass I want to fuck and huge tits falling out of her top.

In her early twenties, Ophelia is wise beyond her years and mature for her age. Being the only daughter of Belen Drakos has hardened her beautiful exterior. Losing her mother six

months ago, only to find out we are her replacement family, adds to her anger.

As she glares at me, I think about how I will torture her. I dream of the pain I will inflict as she's writhing beneath me. I imagine marking her body with my hands, tongue, and cock.

"Well, I'm not scared of you," she says with a bored look, stuffing the gun into her waistband. She clutches the bag over her shoulder and bumps her elbow into my chest. "I got a few more guns with your name on them if you think about coming near me again."

Ophelia Drakos is a tiny little thing. She's so small I could tuck her under my arm, but she doesn't fuck around.

And it turns me on.

With a body made for sin, she looks damn good in this skin-tight tank top and short, spandex shorts that mold to her thick thighs. She has a lot of curves. If she's self-conscious about being bigger than most girls, she doesn't act like it. Ophelia carries herself like she rules the world and everyone in it.

But so does Belen.

She learned it from him.

"Phe," Belen says from the entrance to the sitting room, "I'm not joking. I will disown you if you leave."

"I have money," she fires back and pulls open the front door without a care in the world like she's untouchable. "I don't need you anymore."

"I'll freeze your trust fund," her dad threatens as he walks toward us. "You won't be able to blink without one of my men following you around Beacon Bay."

She turns to face him, breathing hard through her nose, eyes wide with fury. "You're choosing *them* over me?"

He shakes his dark head of hair, inching toward her with a stern look. "I'm choosing to have a family again. I want you to be a part of it. Once you get over the initial shock of the engagement, you'll see this is good for both of us. You've

known Athena for years. Has she ever been anything but nice to you?"

Ophelia presses her lips together, deep in thought. She knows he's right. Our parents only started dating two months ago, four months after Cora died of cancer. My mom was with her friend every step of the way. There wasn't a day she wasn't at the Drakos's house helping her best friend be more comfortable in her final stage of life.

Belen shuts the front door and hovers over his daughter. "This is what your mother wanted."

She snorts at the idea. "No, she didn't. Mom never mentioned anything about you getting remarried to her best friend."

"It's true," my mother says. "Cora asked me to take care of your father. And you."

"She didn't ask you to fuck him."

I want to wring her neck for speaking to my mother this way. Just wait until I get my hands on her. Wait until she's alone at night with no one to protect her. I'm the man who will haunt her nightmares.

"Knowing my mom, she wanted you to come over and cook for him," Ophelia continues, her voice rising a few octaves. "Check on the house. See if he's okay. There's no way she said to marry her husband after she died."

Mom sighs and reaches into her purse to retrieve an envelope, handing it to Ophelia. "I was hoping I would never have to show you this. But your mother wanted us to be happy after she was gone."

Ophelia removes the handwritten note from the envelope and studies every word on the page. Her eyes widen, and then her gaze flicks back to the top of the page so she can reread it.

"At first, I wasn't sure I could do it," Mom explains, "but things have changed between your dad and me. We sought comfort in each other and ended up falling in love."

With a snarl, Ophelia stuffs the page into the envelope and hands it back. I expect her to run again, but she stares at each of us.

Apollo stands at my side with Atlas on his right. The three of us are only one year apart in age since my younger brothers are twins. They have similarities but are not identical. Atlas has a baby face, and Apollo has a more serious look about him. Like he's much older than twenty-four. But maybe that's just because he thinks he's smarter and better than everyone.

"It's her handwriting," Ophelia says after a long pause, eyes downcast. "I can't believe Mom wanted this."

She's coming around to the truth, the bag sliding down her shoulder as she spins to the left. Then, without another word, she heads into the dining room.

Belen lets out a sigh. "I'm sorry." His eyes move from my mother to me and then to the twins. He lifts the bags of food and tips his head at the dining room. "Shall we eat our first meal as a family?"

I want to laugh at how easily he let us into his carefully guarded world. Look at the great and powerful Belen Drakos simping over a woman.

Dumb fucker.

He was so wracked with grief that it made him an easy target. For my mother, this arrangement is about money. But for my brothers and me, it's about revenge. We're here because of what Belen did to our father ten years ago. Belen doesn't know it, but we're coming for his empire.

And his little girl.

Chapter Four

OPHELIA

I SUDDENLY HATE MOUSSAKA, EVEN THOUGH IT'S MY FAVORITE meal. My mother would make it for me every Sunday until she got sick. Then, we started ordering from Mykonos.

We had our tradition.

Mom felt like shit toward the end but didn't want us to stop making memories. She said those days I would remember long after she was gone.

Mom was right.

I lived for Sundays.

They were my favorite.

Until today.

How could my dad break the news of his engagement today? Of all days. It's not just a Sunday but the six-month anniversary of her death. I was upstairs sleeping because I was too depressed and whacked out on sleeping pills to leave my bedroom.

Before my father left the house, he promised to eat dinner with me. He said we could spend some quality time together. Little did I know that meant dinner with my new family—my new stepbrothers.

Fuck.

Ares and his smirks.

I hate him most of all.

I'm stuck between Ares and Apollo, with Atlas on his twin's right. Fuck Apollo and his pretty boy-good looks. And fuck Atlas and that adorable baby face.

Fuck all of them.

I stuff a forkful of moussaka, the Greek version of lasagna, into my mouth. A drop of sauce falls onto my chest, right between my cleavage.

I lick my thumb and wipe away the sauce, but not without the eyes of my three soon-to-be step-brothers on me.

"Need help with that?" Ares whispers so our parents can't hear him.

The bastard winks at me, his laughter infectious to his siblings, who join the chorus.

Ares stares at my shirt like he has X-ray vision. "I have a few ideas for welcoming our new sister to the family."

Gross.

So why am I slightly turned on by them licking my body until I'm screaming their names? I hate them. The Demetriou brothers are bad news and soon to be related to me. Well, not by blood, but still, a girl has to have some standards.

Atlas keeps his mouth shut. He's quiet, and I know from first-hand experience that the quiet ones are worse. They're the people you never see coming.

"If you don't shut up," I tell Ares, "I'll reintroduce my Glock to your kidneys. See how much you laugh then, Greek god."

"Your tough girl act doesn't phase me." He shoves his suit jacket to the side to reveal his weapon. "Two can play this game."

See, the thing is, I have always had to act like a bitch. Kids in school ridiculed me for my weight, especially the girls. Gym class sucked ass. And don't even get me started on having to shower in front of a bunch of skinny-ass bitches who called me Fattie Phelia.

Stupid nickname.

Stupid girls.

I was passed up when kids chose who they wanted on their sports team. No one ever thought the chunky girl could run. Or catch a ball. Or do anything but stuff her face with food.

So I grew a thick skin.

I learned how to defend myself and give the bullies a taste of their own medicine. Of course, my mom wasn't thrilled about Dad teaching me how to shoot or fight. But she knew one day it would be necessary.

I'm a Drakos.

We were born to lead.

And as the asshole god of a man beside me gives me a shit-eating grin, I'm thankful for those bullies. Because now I know how to handle men like Ares.

They are all the same.

I'd never have a shot with a sex god like Ares, but he acts like it with how his gaze keeps dropping to my cleavage. He can look all he wants because I will never touch him. I don't care if his big hands would feel good spreading me open. Or if that sexy-as-fuck mouth would give me world-class orgasms.

Nope, I don't care.

Ares watches me like a predator while his younger brothers resume eating. I spread the meat sauce around my plate and make it look like I'm enjoying the food. It's an old habit. I hate eating in front of people I don't know well.

Our parents are laughing, drinking wine, chatting up Atlas, and asking about his art. He creates marketing materials for their family's businesses, never without his sketchbook.

I glance at Ares and Atlas's tattoos, wondering if Atlas drew them. They're good, from what I can see, and artistic. Not shitty tattoos you choose out of a book at the tattoo studio.

If Apollo has ink, I can't see any. His skin is tanned, smooth, and flawless compared to his brother's bodies, which

look more like canvases.

“Belen, you should let my sons help Ophelia with the clubs,” Athena says. “They can keep the handsy men away from her.”

“That’s okay, Athena. I can handle myself. The guys at the club never mess with me. They know I’ll cut off their balls and shove them down their throat if they even think about touching me.”

Ares grins like a villain.

Apollo looks intrigued.

Atlas raises an eyebrow.

“Ophelia,” Dad gasps. “What is with the attitude tonight?”

I shrug. “Don’t you think your new family should know what they’re getting into? I’m not a sweet girl. You made sure of it. So let’s cut the shit and stop acting like this dinner doesn’t suck.”

Apollo grunts in agreement.

Atlas laughs, his voice barely a whisper, “God, she has balls. I fucking love it.”

“What did you say, sweetie?” Athena asks her son.

“Nothing, Ma.” He shakes his head, eyes on me. “Just saying that Ophelia is kind of a badass.”

“I wouldn’t let my daughter run Olympus alone if she weren’t up to the task,” Dad says with a smile. “However, I do wish I had taught her better manners.”

“You taught me all the ones that count,” I say in my defense. “Don’t shit where you eat. Never forget to turn off the safety before you point the gun at a man’s head. And my personal favorite. Always give a man the courtesy of choosing his death... if he’s earned it.”

Dad curses in Greek under his breath. “Maybe reserve your true self for another day, Ophelia. You’ll scare them away before we even walk down the aisle.”

Duh, silly.

That's the point.

“Don’t worry about us, Belen,” Ares says as if speaking for the entire family. “We can *handle* Ophelia.”

I'm sure you can, you arrogant dick.

I snort at his comment. “I’d like to see you try, Greek god.”

He doesn’t respond, but I can tell by the look in his eyes that he’s accepted my challenge.

Game on.

Chapter Five

APOLLO

I LIKE TO WATCH AND TAKE IN EVERYTHING AROUND ME. That's my gift. I'm the calm and logical Demetriou brother.

Ares is a hothead, the muscle of our family, and rarely passes up a good fight. He will go toe-toe with anyone, but unlike our new stepsister, he's not fearless.

My older brother is reckless.

Atlas is softer around the edges, like our mom. He's introverted and prefers to huddle in the corner with his sketchbook. My twin is pretending to join the conversation with our parents while sketching in the book on his lap.

And I observe.

I'm collecting bits of information from everyone at the table and listening to every word, noticing the subtle shift in their tones and how they move their bodies.

Body language is everything.

I know Ophelia is angry about more than her mother's death. And I wonder if she feels like she always has to prove herself being the daughter of Belen Drakos. That can't be easy. Not when he's one of the most notorious men in the city and has a constant target on his back.

Our new stepdad thinks he's getting a sweet deal marrying a beauty like our mother. But she's the one conning him. When we're done with Belen, we will have everything owed to us.

His money.

His empire.

This city.

I can tell by the looks Ares shoots at Ophelia that he wants her. But she won't come easily. That girl has fire in her veins and a mouth like a sailor. She would have shot the ball sack clean off Ares's body if her dad hadn't come home.

I like her energy.

She's unpredictable and flies off the handle too quickly, but she could be an asset to us. A woman like Ophelia commands respect and doesn't let men walk over her. I bet she's always the first person people notice when she enters a room.

I can also see she's insecure about her weight. She tugs at her tank top, and Ares's mouth grows wider as her shirt gets lower. At first, I thought she was teasing him until I realized what she was doing.

Ophelia doesn't want to hide her tits. And why would she? They're spectacular. She's yanking on the fabric to hide her stomach.

It's her one insecurity.

She's a badass bitch with a sharp tongue and only fears being seen. Whenever Ares looks at her body, she tosses back more insults—using her words to hurt him.

Ares likes it, though.

Mouthy women turn him on.

I watch Ares and Ophelia bicker like old lovers, going back and forth until I want to throat-punch them.

“Do you think you two could stop arguing for five seconds?” I ask before we eat dessert. “You're giving me a fucking headache.”

Ophelia rolls her eyes. “No one is chaining you to that chair.” She throws out her hand toward the dining room entrance. “You're free to go.”

Ares runs a hand across his jaw like he wants to pin her to the table and eat her for dessert. These two are going to be fucking by the end of the week. Either that or they're going to kill each other.

Trying to be the peacekeeper of the group, I say to Ophelia, "No, I think I'll stay and enjoy your company. It's been so lovely."

Ares snickers. "It has, hasn't it?"

"Got something to say to me?" Ophelia asks him, twirling a dark lock of hair around her finger.

She's sexy without effort. This is the first time in years I have felt attraction toward a woman. After what happened to me in college, I can't even touch a woman.

But I want to touch her.

The Drakos are our marks, not our family. I don't need some sassy girl fucking with my plans. Ares would worship her body like a temple in a heartbeat. He might kill her afterward, though. Or maybe she would kill him.

Mom digs through the bag from Mykonos. She hands plastic containers to Belen, and he flips open the tops of the desserts, telling us to dig in. They went all out for the celebration. There's everything from baklava and rizogalo to loukoumades and galaktoboureko.

My mouth waters at the loukoumades. I'm a sucker for a good doughnut, especially one dipped in honey.

Ares doesn't make a move because God forbid he eats sugar. He's too obsessed with his body and what he puts into it to enjoy himself. Besides, he says that carbs slow him down in the ring. Well, shitty carbs, anyway. Anything fried and slathered in something that isn't all-natural or organic would never go into his mouth.

Atlas grabs a piece of baklava and eats the pastry with one hand while drawing with the other. Ophelia is having a face-off with Ares, and I wonder if she's waiting to choose a dessert until he does. I'm curious if she's insecure about eating around people. She barely touched her dinner.

I grab a doughnut from the container and hold it in front of her mouth. “Open up. You need to eat.”

Her eyes widen right before she gives me a look like she’s going to punch me in the face. “I can afford to skip a meal.”

I glance at her face before letting my eyes lower to her tits, and when I reach her stomach, she wraps her arms around herself. “I said take a bite. You barely ate your food.”

Her gaze flicks between Ares and me. Then she opens her mouth and lets me place the doughnut on her tongue. She only accepted the dessert to say *fuck you* to my brother.

“That’s a good girl,” I tell her. “Now, eat something before I keep force-feeding you loukoumades.”

Chapter Six

OPHELIA

DINNER IS A BLAST. EVERY WOMAN'S WET DREAM—AKA ARES—is ogling me. I got Apollo feeding me doughnuts because he doesn't think I'm eating enough. Like I can't afford to skip a meal? I nearly laughed in his face.

Thankfully, Atlas is too busy drawing on his lap under the table to notice me. He made a few comments earlier but has retreated into a creative bubble. I watch his hand move quickly across the page and wonder if he rubs his cock at the same pace.

What is wrong with me?

All of the Demetriou brothers are ridiculously hot. They can have any woman they want. So why do Apollo and Ares look at me like I'm their snack?

I hate them.

I want them.

It's annoying.

What I wouldn't give to have Apollo feed me again like I'm some goddess or have Ares's full lips pressed to mine as he fucks me with his inked fingers under the table.

Fuck.

I need to get laid.

I'm not used to having this kind of attention from men. All of the guys at Olympus know I'm Belen Drakos's daughter.

They keep their eyes off my body and treat me as an extension of my father.

These two brave souls don't seem to have any boundaries. Ares acts like he hasn't had sex in months and wants a quick fix. But there's no way he'd go sexless for long, not with that face and body.

I pluck a piece of baklava from the plate and chew, intentionally licking the honey from my fingers one digit at a time.

Apollo gives me a satisfied grin. "Eat some more."

Why is he being so bossy?

"I've had plenty," I tell him.

He leans closer, dipping his head down to speak against the shell of my ear. "You don't have to be afraid to eat in front of us."

How dare he?

I scoff at him, holding my head high and hoping he can't see the shame written on my face. "I'm not afraid of anything."

But he's right.

I picked at most of my food, hoping no one would notice. That's my MO. Call it my big girl complex, but I have never been comfortable eating in front of others. I swear they look at me weirdly, wondering why I'm even bothering to eat when I could drink water and gain weight.

"You're a brave girl," Apollo says. "But I see right through you. Lower your guard a little, Ophelia. It won't kill you to get to know us." I turn my head to see his lips curl up into a grin that reaches his honey-brown eyes. "We're going to be family."

I'm unsure what game they are playing, but I'm not an idiot. I have all three of them figured out. Apollo listens and wants people to think he's the nice one. Ares is the family's enforcer and strong-arms people into doing what he wants. Atlas is the creative, silent type.

Apollo and Ares are intentionally trying to get closer to me. It's not because we're going to be step-siblings. Those sexy assholes are up to no good. They have every reason to hate my family after what happened to their father.

Adrian Demetriou was gunned down outside one of my father's clubs after a falling out with my dad that broke up their family. And now Athena is marrying her ex-husband's former business partner. Adrian died one month before my mother passed away, and the murder has gone unsolved.

Did my dad push him out of the business, ruin his family, and kill him to get closer to Athena? Was it an elaborate plan for them to be together? The note Athena showed me was written in my mother's handwriting. Maybe she was doped up on meds and unaware of what she was writing. I distrust Athena even more now than I did earlier, knowing I must keep her at arm's length.

"How do you like running Olympus?" Apollo says with one of his award-winning grins, snapping my attention to him.

"I was born to lead. The role suits me perfectly." I study his handsome face, searching for whatever he's hiding. "What do you do with your free time?"

"I run a private equity group and help Ares with Akropolis, his fight club."

I glance at Ares, and he winks.

"You should watch me fight, little dragon. I'll put on a show just for you."

I shake my head. "Thanks for the offer, but I've got a club to run. Doubt I will have any time."

"Then make time."

He removes his suit jacket and rolls his sleeves, exposing his muscular forearms covered in ink. Beneath the white dress shirt, his biceps strain against the fabric. Dark ink peeks out from beneath the top few buttons of his shirt, and I can see he's cut like an athlete.

Down, girl.

I need a cold shower to erase the memory of Ares taking off his jacket. That's an image that will forever be burned into my brain.

"My schedule is packed," I deadpan as I pretend to check the calendar app on my phone. "I'll see if I can fit you in between now and never."

"You think you're funny, don't you?" Ares sinks into the chair, his big body taking up space as he crosses his arms over his chest. "Let's see who gets the last laugh."

"I love how much you fuck with him." Apollo's voice is deep and smooth, and once again, he's invading my personal space. "Do you know how often anyone talks like this to Ares?"

"I'm guessing never."

He nods, smirking. "We're going to have so much fun together, Ophelia."

Chapter Seven

ATLAS

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN DIFFERENT FROM MY BROTHERS. AS A child, I would sit in the corner and draw with my crayons while Apollo read a book and Ares stacked his blocks, only to kick them over.

Apollo enjoyed learning.

Ares liked to hit things.

And I created art.

Between the three of us, we make the perfect team. It's always been us against the world. And after our dad's murder, it brought us closer, bonding us in ways we hadn't expected. For three people with little in common, we found one thing to unite us—our hatred for Belen Drakos.

So when Apollo and our mother devised a plan to help us get our birthright back from Belen, we jumped at the chance. I wouldn't be sitting in this dining room wanting to rip out my future stepfather's eyeballs if our revenge wasn't in sight.

Too bad Belen's daughter is involved. Ophelia is an unnecessary complication, a pawn in a much larger game. Poor girl will go down with her father if she doesn't see things our way.

Belen raises his glass of wine with a smile. "I'm so thankful you're all here. After Cora passed, I didn't think I would ever remarry, let alone have a family again."

Ophelia spits the wine into her glass and sets it on the table. I can't tell if this is her way of saying *fuck you* to her father or if the wine is disgusting.

Maybe a little of both.

I hate wine, so I raise my glass of craft beer. My brothers follow suit, slapping on fake smiles to make our mother happy. It's the least we can do since she's gone to great lengths to get us here.

We'll have it all soon.

Because of her.

Our mother isn't just named after a goddess—she *is* a goddess. Like her namesake, she's full of wisdom and power.

“To my beautiful bride and her sons.” Belen flashes a smile that I want to punch off his stupid face. “I can't wait for us to become a family.” He holds out his glass and says in Greek, “*Yamas.*”

I drink, even though this beer is shit. Our mother smiles and sips her wine. Ophelia sits between Ares and Apollo, groaning so loud her dad's eyes snap to her. He gives her a warning look to behave herself.

I flip open the sketchbook on my lap and return to drawing Ophelia. She's consumed my thoughts from the second she pointed a Glock at Ares. Beautiful and strong, she has the power of a goddess when she speaks, commanding the attention of a room.

I can see why Belen's men respect her. She's his heir apparent and a take-no-shit kind of woman. Watching her put Ares into his place is such a fucking turn-on.

My charcoal pencil moves across the paper on my lap, and Apollo glances at my drawing.

He shakes his head and whispers, “Don't go soft on me. We follow the plan.”

Keeping my head down, I nod. I've been in a creative zone since Ophelia tried to shoot us.

That was fun.

She's a real spitfire rebel and won't put up with Ares and his usual bullshit. I can already see the two of them hate fucking on every surface of this house.

Apollo puts his hand on the page, so I can't move another inch. "If all goes well, we'll have everything we need by the wedding."

"One month," I mutter. "I can make it until then."

The thought of living under the roof of the man who murdered our father floods my veins with anger. I didn't want to live here. Neither did Ares. But Apollo insisted this was the only way. Attack them from the inside—just like the Greeks did to the Trojans.

Anything to win.

Chapter Eight

OPHELIA

AFTER DINNER, I FOLLOWED MY DAD TO HIS OFFICE ON THE first floor. He closes the French doors behind us and draws the shades to cover the glass.

“I don’t understand,” I say the second he turns around to look at me. “Why are you doing this? You don’t have to marry Mom’s best friend.”

Dad runs his fingers through his black hair, which doesn’t have an ounce of gray. He’s only forty-five and had me at twenty-two. My parents got pregnant with me after they dated for three months, but he married Mom because he loved her.

At least, I thought he did.

The man who provided round-the-clock care, catering to my mom’s every need in her final days, was a man in love—a man who was terrified of losing her.

I remember walking into her room one morning. He sat beside her bed, his head down and holding her hand. Dad begged her not to go and pleaded for her to stay.

Not like she had a choice.

She wasn’t awake when he said any of those things. Mom was doped up from the meds, breathing softly in rhythm to the monitors.

“I don’t expect you to understand, Phe.” He turns his back on me, crossing the room to stand before the bar. Uncorking a

bottle of scotch, he sighs. “Losing your mother was the worst pain imaginable. I wouldn’t wish that on my worst enemy.”

“I understand you’re hurting because I am, too.” My voice trembles from the wave of emotion sweeping over me. “I miss her every second of every single day.”

“Ophelia, please.” He pours a scotch and sinks into the leather chair behind his desk, looking like a king. “It doesn’t hurt as much when Athena’s around. I need you to see this is good for both of us. You’ll have a mother again.”

My teeth grit in anger, my jaw clenched so tightly I feel like it could snap. “I don’t want another mother. I already had one. You said Athena isn’t replacing Mom, but it feels like you’re trying to forget about her.”

“No, I’m not. I’m trying to move on with my life. This is what your mother wanted. You read the letter.”

“So you’re only marrying Athena because of a letter?”

He shakes his head. “Athena was here after your mother passed. I wouldn’t have gotten through the grief without her.”

“If you like fucking her, keep her around as a sidepiece. You don’t have to marry her.”

“Ophelia,” he shouts. “What has gotten into you? I don’t like how you speak to me, especially not in front of Athena and her boys.”

“Why? Afraid it will undermine your power?”

He drinks half the contents of his glass and slams it on the desk. “Enough! If you continue acting this way, I won’t leave my club in your hands.”

How dare he?

I want to yell, but I regain my composure to keep myself from saying anything I will regret. Olympus means everything to me. I don’t have much left, and if he were to take it from me, I’d have no reason to live. Since Mom’s death, knowing I have somewhere to go gets me out of bed.

“Dad, I’ve been running Olympus for the past five years. My anger has nothing to do with how I operate our business.”

“My business.” He points a finger at his chest. “*Mine.*”

“I’m your heir,” I remind him. “The clubs will be mine someday.”

“Only if you show your loyalty to this family.”

Furious, I shoot up from the chair. I feel like a soda can shaken and ready to explode. “I’m tired.” An excuse to get away from him and decompress. “Can I go?”

He flings his hand out at the door. “Go!”

He doesn’t need to tell me twice, so I bolt out of the room and race upstairs. There are empty boxes folded and propped against the wall in the hallway on the second floor.

I bet Apollo took the time to do that. He seems like the organized brother. While Ares is pure chaos and Atlas is oblivious. He’s always got his head in his sketchbook.

Thankfully, my stepbrothers have disappeared into their new bedrooms, conveniently located on the same floor as mine.

Thanks, Dad.

He could have split these assholes between the three floors of this massive house. Instead, he left them on the second floor with me. Athena and my dad have the entire third floor.

We have ten bedrooms and fifteen bathrooms. I guess he wanted privacy to have a fuckfest with his new bride. Lord knows I don’t want to hear Athena moaning my dad’s name in the middle of the night. I would rather slit my wrists.

I shower and change into pajamas. A pair of shorts and a matching spaghetti strap top with no bra. When I’m home, I like to be comfortable. Tonight is my first night off in months. And those assholes ruined it. After Mom died, I forced myself to work so I didn’t have to be here with the reminder she was gone.

I hear doors open and shut in the hallway. My new roomies are talking so loudly I catch hints of their conversation through my door, but not enough to get the full context. So I poke my head into the hallway, drying my hair with a towel while keeping myself out of view.

They can't see me from the den.

I was planning to watch a movie to relax, and they were in *my* spot.

On *my* couch.

Fan-fucking-tastic.

"I wanna nut all over her big tits and fat ass," Ares tells his brothers. "Welcome her to the family the proper way."

That motherfucker!

My mouth opens in horror, the same shame I usually feel heating my cheeks. I'm so self-conscious about my weight that it's all I can think about some days. I lost ten pounds before my mom died. But I haven't dieted since.

I creep down the hallway past their bedrooms to peek into the den.

Atlas sits beside Ares, shoving his hand through his dark hair that looks windblown but not messy. "She's wound so tight."

"I bet her pussy's even tighter," Ares comments with one of his sexy smirks. "I can't wait to be balls deep in her."

"Both of you are fucking idiots," Apollo interrupts. "She's not going to touch either of you."

"Please," Ares groans. "When has any woman ever told me no?"

Arrogant prick.

"Wanna bet?" Atlas says, challenging his older brother. "I got money on Ophelia that says she'll shoot your dick off before she lets you put it inside her."

He's been quiet most of the night, busy with his drawings, and surprisingly coming to my rescue. So maybe the shy ones aren't so sneaky after all.

"I second that." Apollo laughs. "She hates you, bro. You don't have a chance in Hades."

"There's nothing better than a hate fuck." Ares spreads his long legs, grabbing himself over his gray sweatpants. "She can hate me all she wants. I'm going to fuck the hate right from her wet cunt."

Oh, my God.

He's so vulgar, yet I'm turned on listening to him talk about me. I shouldn't be into this, but no man has ever spoken about me like a sexual being. Not that I want to be objectified. But shit, I *want* to be desired.

And Ares wants me.

Me.

Their conversation about me ends with the brothers fighting over what to watch on TV. I take this as my cue to interrupt their argument over the latest shows on Netflix.

I stroll into the den.

Their heads turn to me.

One at a time.

First, Ares. Then Apollo. Even Atlas looks up from his sketchbook.

Ares spreads his legs wider when his eyes land on me. With him wearing tight, gray sweatpants, I can see the outline of his dick through them.

Holy fucking hell.

He's not even hard and could hurt someone with that thing. As my eyes sweep over the group, I wonder if his brothers are equally endowed.

What is my problem?

My mind keeps drifting back to dark, dirty places whenever I'm around them.

Ares's eyes appraise every inch of my body. He licks his lips when he gets to my breasts for the third time. "Come to chill with us, little sis?"

I scan the couch, wondering if I should drop into the cushion beside him or return to my room.

"Need somewhere to sit?" Ares notices my silent deliberation, never missing a beat. "You can sit on my face." He sticks out his tongue and acts like he's eating my pussy. He taps his fingers on his thigh beside his massive dick when I don't respond. "Or you can sit on my lap and let me give you a ride."

"Hard pass." I move in front of him, holding out my palm. "Give me the remote."

He leans back, so I'm even more aware of the ridges of his chiseled abdomen and the fact he's not wearing underwear. Shirtless and completely covered in tattoos, I can't see many places for Ares to add more ink.

Ares raises his arms above his head, keeping the remote out of my reach. "You want it, little dragon? Come and get it."

I bend forward, and Ares grabs my boob with his free hand. I'm suddenly aware that I forgot to wear a bra around them.

Fuck.

It's not like I should have to wear a bra in my own house when I'm trying to relax before bed. But now I have three men living with me and staring at me like a mouse caught in the lion's den.

"Pig." I smack his hand. "This is my house. Hand over the remote before I kick your ass."

He gains pleasure from pissing me off. If there's any truth to his hate-sex comment, this is foreplay to Ares. So I play along, hoping to give him the worst blue balls of his life.

I climb onto his lap and straddle him, reaching for the remote.

“If you want to fuck, baby,” Ares says, rocking his hips, “you only have to ask. I’m game.”

“I’m not your *baby*.” I fall forward to grab the remote, missing by a few inches. “Asshole.”

I crash into his face, and my top inches down, nearly exposing my hard nipple to the cold air. This isn’t Ares’s doing. My nipples are hard from the air conditioning blasting through the house.

Liar.

Before I can fix my shirt back into place, Ares shoves my top down the rest of the way and sucks my nipple into his mouth. It feels so good a moan slips past my lips. Our eyes connect for a split second, and my lips part slightly for him before I realize what’s happening.

This is so bad.

Why does it feel so good?

Atlas looks like he wants to take my other nipple into his mouth, but he watches with his twin.

When I finally come to my senses, I grip Ares by the hair and yank his mouth off my nipple, moving the fabric over the swollen bud wet with his saliva. “What the fuck was that?”

He cups my ass in his big hands and pushes me into his hard dick. “That was me claiming what’s mine.”

“I’m not yours.” I peel his hands from my ass and slide off his lap. “Give me the remote. No more games.”

“I bet your panties are soaked for me,” he guesses, and the fucker is right. I’m drenched for him. “I’ll give you the remote if you let me check for myself.”

I bend down so our faces are only inches apart. “This is my house. If you don’t let me watch what I want, I’ll get my Glock and follow through on what we started earlier.”

“You got a thing for guns, don’t you?” He nods at the gun on the table and says, “Pick it up. You can shoot me with it. Anywhere but my face or dick. But first, I want you to take off these shorts.” He tugs at the hem, and I slap his hand. “Get on the table and spread your legs for me, so I can watch your pussy swallow the barrel.”

My eyes grow wider at his proposal. “You’re legitimately insane.”

He tips his head back and laughs. “I’m not any crazier than you.”

I glance at Apollo and Atlas, who stare at me with interest. Their cocks are hard, tenting their sweatpants. We must have put on more of a show than I realized. It felt like Ares only sucked on my nipple for a second before it was all over.

I’ve never felt wanted by one man, let alone three. This is oddly satisfying and terrifying. Dressed in shorts and a thin top, I usually feel self-conscious about other people looking at me. Home is the only place I dress like this. But around them, I feel desired.

“You wanna get freaky, baby?” Ares waggles his black eyebrows at me, grabbing his crotch. “I’m into some sick and twisted shit. There’s nothing I won’t do to bury my dick in your forbidden pussy.”

I’m curious about his definition of sick and twisted, but hold my tongue. If I show interest in Ares, he’ll never leave me alone. Besides, he’s going to be my stepbrother.

All three of them.

Fuck me.

“You know what,” I tell him, “on second thought, I think I’ll skip watching TV tonight and just go to bed.”

“Good choice,” Apollo says, speaking for the first time since I entered the room. “You’ll need more than a safe word with Ares. I don’t think you’re ready for him yet, sweetheart.”

A safe word?

I hear those a lot at the club.

Ares smirks in response. “Night, little dragon. Don’t forget to stretch out your pussy while you’re having dirty dreams about me.” He strokes his big, hard dick over the top of his sweatpants. “You need to make room for me.”

I open my mouth to say something witty but ignore him and walk away.

“Told you she wouldn’t fuck you,” Atlas says as I enter my bedroom and shut the door without waiting to hear Ares’s response.

Chapter Nine

ARES

MY STEPSISTER PURRS LIKE A KITTEN WHEN SHE MOANS. I wasn't planning to suck on Ophelia's nipple, but when she shoved those big tits in my face, I couldn't help myself. They were there for the taking.

Ophelia storms out of the den after I offer to let her shoot me, which is a shame for both of us. It seemed like a fair trade. Watching her pussy swallow the barrel of my gun would have been worth the bullet wound.

She'll end up shooting me by the end of this month. I might as well get it over with now. At least, we'll both get something out of it.

She left the three of us rock-hard and irritated. Frustration tugs at Apollo's face as he adjusts himself. Atlas covers his boner with the sketchbook and shoves his hand down the front of his sweatpants.

"Told you she wouldn't fuck you," Atlas says the second Ophelia's door shuts at the end of the hallway. "You think every woman wants you, Ares. But Ophelia isn't like the girls you fuck."

I cock my head at Atlas. "What is she like? Please enlighten me, baby brother, since you're so fucking smart."

"You know Atlas is right." Apollo flashes an all-knowing look. "Ophelia is a boss. The men at Olympus respect her for a reason. She's not an extension of her father, and she won't put up with your usual mindfuckery."

“*Mindfuckery?* Did you learn that word at Yale?”

He rolls his eyes. “Jealous much, dickhead?”

Apollo is younger than me by one year and thinks he’s smarter. Maybe he is. The little shit got early acceptance into Yale University and graduated with the highest honors two years ago with a degree in finance.

School wasn’t my strong suit.

I never paid attention.

I was too busy wasting time and fucking girls and a few hot teachers. My face has gotten me far in life. Of my brothers, I’m the best looking and care about what I put into my body.

Apollo is a genius.

Atlas is creative.

I’m the muscle.

We each have a different role to play in this family. I couldn’t figure out the business side of Akropolis, so Apollo agreed to take over the financial shit. I can’t look at a spreadsheet without getting a headache.

Atlas handles the marketing. His brain works differently than Apollo’s, the creative wheels always turning. He’s the reason our fight club has gotten so much attention online.

Still, I’m older than my brothers and don’t need them to advise me, especially not about women. I know what women want.

Me.

“So tell me how you’d win her over,” I say to my brothers, purely out of curiosity.

“She’s insecure about her body,” Apollo tells me.

I roll my eyes at him. “My little dragon isn’t afraid of anything. She’s like Harley Quinn and Daenerys Targaryen rolled into one fine-ass woman.”

“I pay attention.” Apollo leans back on the couch, legs spread as he smirks like he knows more than me. “Reading

people is my specialty. Why do you think I fed her dessert? She's not as indestructible as you think."

I thought it was odd when Apollo got close to Ophelia at dinner. He hasn't touched a woman in four years. Not since the night that screwed up all three of our lives.

"You fed her to fuck with my head," I fire back, annoyed with him always throwing his intelligence in my face. "And to make *her* uncomfortable."

Apollo shakes his head. "I did it to show Ophelia she can eat in front of us. She has a hangup about her weight."

My eyebrows knit together. "What's wrong with her weight?"

"I'm surprised you, of all people, haven't noticed," Atlas interjects. "You're obsessed with being in shape. At least twice a day, you give us shit about what we eat, and we can lift more than you."

"No, you can't," I say with conviction. "I could bench you and Apollo."

"Not the point, Ares," Atlas groans. "You're always telling us we'll get fat if we don't eat organic whatever the fuck. If you do that shit with Ophelia, she'll probably rip off your balls and keep them in a jar on her nightstand."

I roll my eyes.

Apollo threads his fingers behind his head and kicks his long legs up on the coffee table. "While you thought Ophelia was pulling down her shirt to give you a better look at her tits, I saw what she was doing." He glances at Atlas, who seems to follow this conversation better than me. "Trying to hide her stomach."

I'm still not following his train of thought. Ophelia has big tits and a fat ass I want to sink my teeth into. I can't wait for her to smother me with her thick thighs as she's coming on my face and screaming my name. Bonus points if she holds a gun to my head while I'm doing it.

Wouldn't that be a rush?

“I saw it, too,” Atlas adds. “I couldn’t stop drawing her.”

My brother enjoys finding everyone’s flaws and exposing them on paper. He once told me the world is his canvas.

I’m not that poetic.

“She doesn’t have to hide shit from me,” I tell them. “I think we should make a no-clothing rule for when we’re in the house.”

“We’re not here for Ophelia,” Apollo reminds me, lowering his voice. “Keep your eyes on the prize, Ares.”

“I like the idea of taking Ophelia from Belen,” Atlas says, tapping a charcoal pencil on his knee. “He won’t have anyone or anything left by the time we’re done with him.”

“I also like this idea,” I say.

Apollo snorts. “Of course you do. When do you not think with your dick?”

“This isn’t about my dick,” I shoot back. “I want revenge as badly as you do.”

Our dad was Belen’s right-hand man until they had a falling out over money. Dad was the financial manager for the clubs when someone pointed out that funds were missing.

It wasn’t our dad.

He wasn’t a criminal like Belen but a deep thinker like Apollo. Someone set him up to take the fall, and our family went down with him. Mom divorced him six months after the scandal. She was so embarrassed she couldn’t stand to be attached to a man who brought shame to us.

Our dad tried to prove his innocence. He even begged Mom to speak to Belen’s wife since they were best friends. Seven months ago, Dad was murdered while walking to his car outside Olympus—Ophelia’s club.

Anger washes over me as I ball my hand into a fist on my lap. I want to hurt Belen for what he did to us. Atlas snaps my thoughts back to reality when he taps the drawing pencil against the sketchbook.

“What have you been drawing all night?” I hold out my palm, wiggling my fingers. “Hand it over.”

Atlas lifts the book from his lap and shows me a sketch of Ophelia. She looks like an old-school pinup girl with big tits falling out of a corset and high-waisted panties partially covering her stomach. Thighs spread, she leans forward with her hands on her knees, staring back at me with a sexy smile.

He sees her the way I see her.

I can tell Apollo does, too.

“She’s mine.” I snarl at my brothers. “So back off.”

“We’re in this together,” Apollo interjects. “Since when do you not like to share?”

The twins are used to sharing everything. But I never had to share with anyone, not until four years ago when Apollo came home from college a shell of himself.

He asked me to do something I never expected. Then he asked the same of Atlas. We couldn’t say no after what he had been through. So if Ophelia wants one of us, she will get all three of us.

Chapter Ten

OPHELIA

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, I WAKE UP TO THE BED SHIFTING beneath me. It's dark inside the room. The blackout curtains are pulled tight to block out the moonlight. But I can feel *him* move, feel *him* breathing on my neck.

I know without looking that Ares is in bed behind me, trailing his long fingers up my right side. His hand cups my ass over my shorts, exploring my body as if he owns me.

“Get your hand off my ass, Ares.” I elbow him in the chest, but his hand stays on my body. “After what you said about me to your brothers, you don't get to touch me.”

His words from earlier still linger in my mind. I have been called fat more times than I can count. I've felt used and not good enough. And I don't need my new stepbrother to tell me that.

“What did I say?” Ares growls in my ear, a low rumble that sends a shiver down my arms.

I bite my lip and play dead, hoping he will leave my room if I don't respond. But that doesn't work with Ares.

He shakes my arm. “What did I say?”

This time, his voice is deeper and more demanding.

“You said I have a fat ass,” I mutter, embarrassed to say it aloud.

“You *do* have a fat ass.” He grabs another handful and groans in my ear, pushing his hard length between my cheeks.

“Learn how to take a compliment, baby.”

I laugh at his ridiculous suggestion and roll onto my back to look at him. “A compliment? Do you think a woman like me wants to be called fat by a man like you?”

“A man like me?” Ares snickers. “What’s that supposed to mean? I’m not good enough for the Princess of the Night.”

His nickname is a play on what people call my father.

“Are you kidding me?” I shove a hand at his chest since he’s hanging over me, pressing his hard body against mine. “Look at you. I don’t call you Greek god because of your name. Men like you don’t look at women like me.” I peel his fingers off my arm. “You don’t want me, Ares. You only want to control me.”

“That’s not true.” He plants a kiss below my ear, his fingers inching up my stomach. “From the moment you pointed a gun at me, I wanted to tackle you to the floor and fuck you senseless.” His fingers brush over the front of my shorts, right over my sex. “You’re so fucking sexy.”

Sexy?

No man has ever said that about me. Most of the guys I dated were average-looking at best and didn’t have rock-hard bodies like Ares. I chose to date down so I wouldn’t look way out of their league. But if I were to stand beside Ares, with his ripped abs and gorgeous face, I would look like a pity fuck. Like he was only with me because of something I could offer him.

My family’s money.

Our empire.

After his father’s downfall at my dad’s hands, he could be after all of it. There’s no logical reason why three grown men have to live with us. Between the three of them, they own The Apollo Group, Akropolis, and The River Styx. I doubt they’re hurting for money.

His hand moves between my thighs, which I clench to keep him from advancing. “Do you know how much power

you hold right here?” Ares nibbles on my neck, his teeth grazing my hot flesh. “I would do anything you want for a taste.”

I turn my head to the side and snort. “Yeah, right. You only want me because I’m forbidden. Pretty soon, I’ll be your stepsister.”

“Open up for me, little dragon.” He licks my neck, his breath pebbling my skin with tiny bumps. “Let me feel how wet your stepbrother makes you.”

I’m uncomfortable with my body and hate giving him any power over me. But Ares doesn’t seem to be disgusted by me. He genuinely seems interested.

As his long fingers brush the insides of my thighs, I wonder if I shaved my legs and if he can feel my cellulite. I’ve never let a man have sex with me with the lights on. Never let anyone touch me without my shirt or a sheet covering some part of me.

At least it’s dark.

That’s my saving grace.

But he can feel me.

And all my curves.

Ugh.

“Fuck off,” I say, even though I want him more than oxygen. “Get out of my room and go back to yours.”

I press my palms to his solid chest, feeling every ridge of his muscles, and push hard. But he’s built like an athlete, and I can’t move my legs with him pinning me to the mattress.

“Stop torturing me, Ares.”

I reach for my gun on the nightstand, and with some success, my fingers grip the barrel. Unfortunately, he’s quicker than me and wraps his fingers around my wrist. The gun shakes free and is now in his hand.

“What were you planning to do with this?” Ares sits back, using his muscular legs to keep me in place. His other hand

pins me as he aims his massive cock at my thigh. “Answer me.”

I attempt to smack him, and he clutches my wrist. “You have no right to be in my room without my permission.”

“You know what I think?” Using the gun’s barrel, he slides my shorts and panties to the side, exposing my wet pussy to the cold air. “You were too scared to get off with my gun earlier. And you want my help.”

“You’re insane,” I whimper as he drags the cold metal up my slit. “Other women might treat you like a god, but I don’t want anything from you.”

What a lie!

I want him to make me come without touching my least favorite parts. And I want to hear him say I’m sexy again and claim me as if I belong to him.

“The mouth on you, little dragon.” The gun breaches my wet folds. “I’d like to see how your mouth looks when it’s full of my cock.”

His dick is so big I shudder at having him inside me. He was right when he said I would have to stretch myself out. After he sucked my nipple into his mouth, he was hard for me. Fucking Ares would be like getting impaled by a baseball bat.

“Don’t act like you haven’t thought about sucking me off.” He keeps rubbing me with the cold metal, and I’m so horny I move my hips to create more friction. He pushes his finger into my mouth. “Suck it.”

“I hate you,” I moan, so close to finding a release.

He shakes his head, sliding his finger across my lips. “No, you don’t.” His finger breaches my mouth, and when he slides it in, I don’t fight him, sucking him the way I would his dick. He glances down and watches what he’s doing to me, seeing my wetness build with each thrust of my hips. “You’re a dirty little bitch, aren’t you?”

My eyes widen at his words.

“Shhh,” he says before he pulls the barrel away, leaving me humping his dick through his sweats. “It’s not an insult. I’m going to have to teach you how to take compliments.”

Compliments?

I’m so wet I can hear what he’s doing to me. Smell my arousal, clinging to the air like perfume. Despite the insanity of what we’re doing, I’ve never felt more desired.

He pulls his finger back so I can breathe again, and my moan fills the room. Ares places his hand on my breast and squeezes. “I love your tits. They’re fucking perfect. Have you ever let a man fuck these?”

I shake my head, unable to form words or thoughts after he got me so close to coming and stopped.

“I want to fill all your holes,” he says with hunger in his eyes. “There’s not a single place on your body I don’t want to violate.”

It sounds crazy, but I want him to do that—anything to feel how he’s making me feel right now. In high school, I always wondered what it would be like to date a guy like Ares. Popular, hot, and filthy rich.

He inches down my body, gripping my hips so his fingers burrow into my thick skin. I don’t like when men touch my love handles. It makes me feel gross. But the way Ares claims me ignites my skin with flames.

“Mmm.” He bends down to lick the skin right below my belly button, putting him in the last place I want him to feel with any part of his body, let alone his mouth. “You smell so sweet.” His tongue inches lower until he’s sucking on my clit, and I fist his hair between my fingers, begging him for more. “Do you like how your stepbrother licks your pussy?”

That comment returns me to reality, and I shove his face away. “You’re not my fucking stepbrother.”

“Not yet.” Another lick as he grips the backs of my thighs. “When your pussy’s forbidden, it will taste even sweeter.”

I can't believe I'm letting him do this. The oxygen finally returns to my brain, and I can think clearly. I've come to my senses about Ares. He's not a good man and probably wants to hurt me.

Use me.

So I inch up the bed toward the headboard, out of his grasp.

"Where are you going, little dragon?" Ares pounces on me like a lion attacking its prey. "I'm not done with you."

I yank the sheet over my body, needing to hide from him. "Well, I'm done with you." I lift the Glock from the bed and point it at his forehead. "You have three seconds to leave my bedroom before I shoot."

Ares laughs. "C'mon, baby. I know you want to come." He yanks the sheet away from my body. "Let me finish eating your pussy."

"What's in this for you?" I keep the gun raised to create distance between us. "Are you going to run back to your brothers and laugh about how you fucked the fat girl?"

"Fuck, no," he says without hesitation. "And you're not fat. I like your body."

I have difficulty believing anyone who looks like Ares could be interested in me. It was stupid of me to let him touch me. Kiss me down there. I've never allowed a man to do that before for obvious reasons.

"You want something, Ares. And when I figure out what, you're a dead man." I press the barrel to his forehead. "Get out of my room."

With a groan, he slides off the bed. "You're fucking crazy, little dragon. My kind of crazy." He opens the door, allowing light from the hallway into the room so I can get a better look at his face. "We're not done. Not even close."

Chapter Eleven

ARES

I'M HOOKED ON OPHELIA. I'VE NEVER MET A WOMAN LIKE her. She says whatever is on her mind and doesn't give a single fuck.

It's sexy.

"What the hell are you smiling about?" Apollo exits the Jack-and-Jill bathroom between our bedrooms, a towel wrapped around his waist. "And why are you in my room?"

I already know what my brother is going to say. Ophelia is a complication we don't need, not when we're so close to getting everything we want.

"We need to talk about Ophelia." I lay back on his mattress, staring at the ceiling. "She gave me the worst blue balls before she pointed a gun at my head and kicked me out of her bedroom. I think I'm in love."

"No, you're not," Apollo grunts. "But at least that explains why you kept me up all night jerking off to porn. The walls are not *that* thick in this house, Ares."

"No fucking shit. I heard you banging on the wall, but I just turned up the volume on my computer and tuned you out. I'm surprised I have any skin left on my dick." I wink to piss him off. "Think Ophelia will kiss it all better?"

Apollo slips into a pair of boxer briefs and shakes his head. "Fucking idiot. What did you do to Ophelia last night? I know you were in her room."

“She let me lick her pussy before she got all weird.” I grab my semi-hard dick and sigh. “Fuck, Apollo. You don’t get it.”

He flips through the hangers in his closet with his back to me. “Has it occurred to you that women don’t like being assaulted in their bedroom in the middle of the night?”

“I didn’t assault her. She was into it.” I close my eyes and envision her wet pussy and the smell of her juices on my lips long after I left her. “Her pussy was gushing on the barrel of her gun. All for me.”

He stops buttoning his dress shirt and gives me a stern look. “Please tell me you didn’t reenact your gun fantasy with her.”

I raise my hands and shrug. “Okay, then I won’t tell you.”

“Fucking idiot,” he says for the second time, one of his favorite nicknames for me.

To his credit, I do a lot of dumb shit. Pursuing our new stepsister probably ranks in the top ten for me.

Maybe even the top five.

“I don’t approve of you going after her.” Apollo steps into a pair of black slacks, one eyebrow raised. “Stay away from Ophelia. We can’t finish what we started if you don’t get your shit together.”

“I don’t see why we can’t fuck over Belen *and* fuck his daughter. He was ready to disown her yesterday. It doesn’t seem like there’s any love lost between them.”

Apollo looks at himself in the mirror after he dresses in a black suit jacket and fixes the lapels. He reminds me of a banker, clean-cut and polished. My brother is fancy and only wears custom suits.

I wore a suit yesterday because Mom wanted us to make a good impression. She didn’t want Belen to think I was a thug with all my ink. So I did what my mother wanted. That woman always wins. We wouldn’t be closer to getting our revenge if not for her.

Usually, I prefer loose clothing I can wear to the gym. And if I'm going out, jeans and a tee. Atlas is a mix of Apollo and me. Sometimes, he'll dress up to make his twin happy. But when he does, he pairs suits with sneakers and graphic tees.

“Stick to the plan, Ares.” My brother shuts the closet door and sprays cologne onto his wrist, working it into his skin. “I'm not saying you shouldn't keep Ophelia close because we will need her help. But I know how you are with women.”

I sit up and stretch out my arms, rolling my eyes at my brother. “Speak for yourself. You're no saint. Wait until she finds out about the freaky shit you like.”

Apollo stands before me, teeth gritted at the mention of his affliction. He never talks about it, but I know it bothers him.

“Once you fuck her, that's it. You won't want her anymore. And if you reject Ophelia when she's already so self-conscious, we'll never get her back on our side. So consider yourself lucky she kicked you out. It was the best thing for both of you.”

Maybe he's right. But fuck, I want to play with her.

Chapter Twelve

MOM INSISTED WE EAT BREAKFAST AS A FAMILY. IT'S WEIRD sitting here with Belen and Ophelia like they're one of us. Laughing and smiling like this is all normal. Passing plates of eggs and fruit as if we do this every day.

After Dad's death, our mom continued planning events with her rich friends, pretending she still had our dad's money. No one knows she's flat broke.

Only her loyal sons.

Her divorce settlement ran out a while back, which means Akropolis, The River Styx, and The Apollo Group are her sole sources of income.

Times are getting tough for us. Apollo's fund is taking a massive hit because of the economy. And to get the information we need to take down Belen, Atlas had to sell half of his bar to a gang called The Serpents.

I'm a gambler. So I dropped half a million on a fight, thinking it was a sure thing. We need the money, so I figured, why not?

But I lost.

Now, I must lose my next fight to pay back the bookie. I shouldn't have bet so much money on a fight that should have been a guarantee, but I also didn't know Belen Drakos was fixing the fights in Beacon Bay. He appointed his brother, Alexander, to collect on my debt.

He's Ophelia's uncle and Belen's older brother. Before we arrived, he handled the finances at the clubs. But our mother has convinced Belen to push his brother aside and let Apollo put his finance degree from Yale to good use.

We need Belen's money.

But we want his power more.

A man like Belen Drakos commands authority. He owns almost every bar, strip club, and nightclub in the area. People bow to the Godfather of the Night. And if we play our cards right, they will kneel for us soon enough.

Ophelia taps my arm with her elbow. "Snap out of it, Ares. Can you pass the syrup?" She points to the bottle on my right. "Any day now. What, are you high?"

"No, I'm not high," I grumble and slide the syrup in front of her.

I was thinking about how I'm going to destroy your father.

I want to lecture her about eating all that sugar on a stack of pancakes. Not because of her weight. I love her body. But I'm a health nut and don't eat sugar, processed foods, or carbs.

Apollo sits beside me and shoots a look that says, "Keep your mouth shut."

If he were eating that shit, he would never hear the end of it. That's why he's biting into an egg sandwich on a whole-grain English muffin.

Better choices equal no shit from me. Besides, I don't have to tell that evil genius about the connection between food and the mind. He's so obsessed with himself and his big brain that he doesn't need a lecture.

I stick with my usual protein shake and bottled water. Atlas doesn't care what I think, stuffing a handful of crispy bacon into his mouth like he hasn't eaten in weeks. He takes the syrup and douses five pancakes with it.

I'd only eat sugar if Ophelia drizzled the syrup on her naked body and let me lick it off her.

Now, there's a thought.

“Phe,” Belen says midway through the meal. “I’m making a few business changes to include your stepbrothers.”

Ophelia grips the fork in her hand, nose scrunching at the word *brothers*. I don’t like it, either, but I don’t care if she calls me brother, uncle, or daddy.

Whatever floats her boat.

I’ll still fuck her good.

“What kind of changes?” Ophelia flicks her long, dark hair over her shoulder, practically glowing. Probably from my visit to her bedroom last night.

“This week, I want you to sit down with Atlas and review the new marketing materials for the clubs. And I’d like you to bring Apollo to Olympus.”

She curls her fist around the fork, teeth gritted. “Are you kidding me? I don’t need a babysitter. I’ve been managing the clubs on my own for years.”

“No one said you need a babysitter,” Belen says. “Atlas is a very talented artist and has a lot of ideas for how we can attract more customers.”

“Oh, does he?” Ophelia narrows her eyes at Atlas, who is sketching on his lap under the table. “What about Apollo?”

“He has a finance background and will help you with the books.”

“What about Uncle Alexander?” She drops the fork onto the plate, leaving her half-eaten pancakes untouched. “He handles the finances.”

Belen shakes his head. “Not anymore. I’ve given him a promotion.”

Her face drops at the news. “To what?”

“Alexander will handle the shipments at the warehouse. Nothing you need to worry about, Phe.”

In other words, her uncle oversees Belen's illegal businesses. The women, guns, drugs, and products he imports and exports. That's where he gets the money to open more clubs. It's why we're sitting in a ten thousand square foot mansion with ten bedrooms and fifteen bathrooms.

"Okay," Ophelia says with a sad look in her pretty brown eyes. "But if Apollo isn't up for the task, I want Uncle Alexander to return to Olympus."

"I'm up for the task." Apollo slides his arm across the back of her chair, careful not to touch her. "Looking forward to working with you, sis."

He winks, and she groans.

I love watching her squirm.

Chapter Thirteen

OPHELIA

I NEED TO GET THE FUCK OUT OF THIS HOUSE BEFORE I LOSE my mind. Living under the same roof with my new stepbrothers is suffocating. My father and his line of work make it harder to have friends, leaving Constantine. He's my driver, bodyguard, and confidante.

I park in front of his house and bang on the door. "Connie, it's me."

He lives in a single-story house on the South Side of Beacon Bay. It's not the nicest neighborhood, at least compared to mine. That's why I begged my father to give Constantine a raise, but he still lives in the same old house despite the vast difference in his income.

Constantine opens the door, shirtless and wearing a pair of black track pants hanging low from his hips. He's solid muscle from head to toe and tattooed. My bodyguard is a former Navy SEAL and is the only person who makes me feel safe.

As the heir to the Drakos empire, I have a target on my back. One time, Constantine even had to take a bullet for me. He's the most loyal person I know and my only real friend. There's no one I trust more with my secrets.

He scrubs a hand through his short, dark hair and eyes me up. "Something wrong, O?"

"Yes." I throw my hands up in anger. "Everything is wrong, Connie. Can I come in?"

I'm being a little overdramatic, but I want Constantine to hug me and remove the pain. Thinking about how my father is betraying my mother's memory six months after her death kills me. It's one thing to date Athena but another nightmare to marry her.

He holds the door with his hip, giving me enough room to enter the house. "What happened?"

"My dad is engaged to Athena." I follow him into the living room and sit on the leather couch that smells like cigars. "He also moved her annoying sons into my house. Those assholes woke me up last night making all kinds of noise."

His eyes widen. "This is news to me. Your dad usually tells me everything."

"Me too," I agree. "Why would he do this? Is he sick, too, and he's afraid to tell me? You should have seen him last night." I shake my head, furious with my father. "He comes home with dinner that I thought we were eating alone and announces he's marrying Athena. And then he gets pissed at me because I'm not over the moon about it."

He scratches the dark stubble on the corner of his jaw. "He did that to you on your mom's six-month anniversary?"

I bob my head, on the verge of tears, wondering what Mom would think about this marriage. "Convenient timing, huh? He's been in mourning with me since before she passed. There's no way he forgot the day."

Constantine wraps his arm around me. "I know this hurts, O. But I get where your dad is coming from."

I swipe at a fallen tear and look at him. "You do?"

He nods. "When my wife died, I couldn't stand to be alone. I went to bars and picked up women every night. I even did drugs. Anything to stop my mind from returning to my good memories of her. But after months of partying, I lost my job and could barely pay my rent."

"That's when my dad bailed you out of jail."

Another nod. “I owe everything to Belen. He saved my life. Protecting you has given me purpose again.”

That was three years ago.

“Why haven’t you remarried? You don’t even date.”

He shrugs his broad shoulder against mine. “I haven’t found the right one, I guess.” I see a glimmer of something else in his blue eyes as he glances at me. “Or maybe it’s because the woman I want is unavailable.”

He means me.

I’m emotionally unavailable.

Mentally unavailable.

I take his hand in mine. “Connie, you know how I feel. It’s not going to change. I like what we have.”

He squeezes my hand and flashes a smile that looks forced. “Yeah. It’s better this way.”

A week after my mother died, I got drunk and begged Constantine to fuck me in the back of the limo. Well, I didn’t have to do too much convincing. He was down to fuck and a good distraction for the night. This wall of a man claimed my body like he wanted to imprint his giant dick inside me.

We haven’t fucked since.

My father would kill him.

Back to business as usual.

But it’s not like I haven’t thought about that night since. I rarely let men into my life, especially those who can hurt me. Feeling anything for Constantine would get him killed. So I act like that night never happened.

He does the same.

“What do I do about Athena?” I drop his hand. “She showed me a letter in my mom’s handwriting. I’m still having difficulty wrapping my head around the fact that she permitted them to marry. Why would Mom encourage them to be together after her death?”

“If I had died before my wife, I would have wanted her to be happy.” He turns his head away, biting his bottom lip. “I wouldn’t want her to suffer the way I did. The pain was unmanageable.”

“So what should I do? My dad threatened to disown me if I didn’t accept their marriage and welcome Athena and her sons into our family.”

“There’s nothing you can do. Your dad is marrying Athena. Just pretend you’re happy for them. Don’t rock the boat. You love Olympus too much to have it taken away from you over something you can’t change.”

He’s got a good point.

I can’t change this, just like I couldn’t save Mom. Some situations are out of your hands. You can’t control the outcome, no matter how much you wish and pray.

Constantine rises from the couch and extends his hand to me. “How about I take you to lunch at Cafe Lacroix? My treat.”

I smile at his offer and grab his hand. “That sounds perfect.”

Chapter Fourteen

ATLAS

I LOVE MY BAR. THE RIVER STYX IS THE ONLY PLACE I HAVE ever walked into and said to myself, “I’m home.” I’m not even that big of a drinker, but I wanted someplace I could go to fill the void.

To get inspired.

So I sit behind the bar and glide the charcoal pencil across the page of my sketchbook. Observing people at their highs and lows assists in creating the art that lines the walls of my bar. Every face belongs to a patron. Some are regulars, but I never draw the same person more than once.

Not until Ophelia.

“Hey, boss.” Cheryl slides a glass of water in front of me. “Whatcha drawing tonight?”

I nod at the couple eating baskets of fried foods by the window, fighting over money.

Who will pay the bill? What should they tip the waitress? Should they tip at all?

“Ah, those assholes,” she groans. “They keep asking for free shit. The freebie seekers never tip.”

Cheryl is the head bartender and runs the place when I’m not here. She’s in her late forties with four kids that she sometimes has to bring with her because she can’t find a babysitter.

“He’s a sorry excuse for a man,” I tell her.

“She’s too pretty for him,” Cheryl comments, twirling a lock of blonde hair around her finger. “Way out of that loser’s league. He looks like he crawled from the depths of Hell.”

I bob my head in agreement.

The pale skin beneath his eyes is ringed with dark circles as if he hasn’t slept in days. I haven’t seen him in here before.

“He looks like one of The Serpents’ fanboys.” She laughs. “Bet he’s only hanging around until one of those troublemakers shows up.”

The four psychos who call themselves The Serpents are like local celebrities in Beacon Bay. After I was forced to make a deal with them, my bar became their new headquarters. Belen Drakos has taken everything I love from me.

First, my father.

Now, our mother.

On top of that, Ares is getting blackmailed into losing a fight by Belen Drakos and sent Alexander to collect. My brother bet money he didn’t have with a bookie, and now he has to lose the fight or sell his club. He’s undefeated, so the odds on his next fight are in their favor.

I finish drawing the couple and flip back to a sketch of Ophelia.

Cheryl leans over my shoulder, her thick perfume clinging to the air like syrup. “Who’s that? She’s pretty.”

“My new stepsister,” I bite out through clenched teeth.

I hate her.

But I want her.

I have already filled several pages with sketches of Ophelia. Her power and beauty fuel my passion. Her anger pours out of her, even when she’s not speaking. She’s mad about our parents getting married, which I understand. I’m not thrilled about being Belen Drakos’s stepson.

After Ophelia left the house, I couldn't draw. Nothing popped into my head. She's stimulating my creativity, and I don't like it. The daughter of our enemy can't be my muse.

Cheryl taps me on the shoulder. "Boss, one of those Serpents is looking for you."

I glance up and find Morpheus popping his head out of the storage room. Once he has my attention, he whistles and tips his head. He's the second-in-command of The Serpents.

"Better go see what he wants," she says in a hushed tone. "I'll handle everything while you're gone."

I tuck the charcoal pencil behind my ear and snap the sketchbook shut, sliding off the bar stool to follow Morpheus into the back room.

Last month, I sold half of The River Styx to The Serpents. The deal sucks, but it has its perks. Like getting the information we need to take down Belen Drakos.

People fear the names of The Serpents whispered in the streets—Hades, Morpheus, Charon, and Lethe. Their real identities are unknown.

Our deal was a handshake over a few drinks. Men like The Serpents don't sign contracts. That would mean giving away information that can be used against them.

They come and go most nights, using the storage room to hide their illegal products. I have no idea what they bring into the bar, and I don't care.

I never ask questions.

It's better this way.

I enter the backroom and shut the door.

Morpheus hands me a flash drive. "This is everything you wanted on Belen Drakos."

The Serpents are artists like me but use their skills to recreate rare pieces of art so they can steal the originals. They're splashy about it, too. They were behind Avant Corp's scandal two years ago. It was all over the news.

But their artistic abilities won't help us with Belen. I sold half of my bar because of their backgrounds in cyber intelligence. They come from wealthy families, but you wouldn't know it by looking at any of them, not with all their tattoos.

Morpheus is tall with short, blond hair, muscular but not too bulky. He turns his back on me and walks to the desk in the corner.

I tuck the sketchbook under my arm and approach the desk. "Will you help us take them down?"

Apollo has assured me everything is under control. But all of his plotting with our mother could go sideways, and then what will we be left with in the end?

Nothing.

I can't risk it.

"We can't dismantle Belen's empire by ourselves." I shift my stance as he carefully appraises my face, considering my question.

Morpheus leans forward, his inked hands folded on the desk. "What is our help worth to you?"

A beat passes, and my heart is pounding, clambering to get out of my chest. I don't want to do this, but what choice do I have? We can't attack the Drakos from all sides.

I don't know why The Serpents have taken a liking to my bar. Maybe it's the name and the reference to the Greek underworld, but it's helping me get closer to my goal.

"I'll sign over The River Styx."

Morpheus lifts an eyebrow. "All of it?"

I nod.

A delighted smirk tugs at the right corner of his mouth. "Deal."

And just like that, I have sold my soul to the Devil for revenge.

Chapter Fifteen

OPHELIA

FOR THE REST OF THE WEEK, I IGNORED MY STEPBROTHERS. They kept busy with their businesses, rarely home.

I like it this way.

But this morning, they're sitting at the table with me, shoving the food our chefs made into their stupid mouths like we're a family.

Like this is normal.

I'm eating pancakes loaded with syrup because food is like an old, smelly stuffed animal a child clings to when upset. Food brings me comfort. Even on the shittiest days, I can find peace in my favorite meals.

A bowl of mint chocolate chip ice cream. A plate of loaded nachos with jalapeños. Moussaka from Mykonos.

Today, I go with an old favorite. Mom made me pancakes every morning before school. She'd slather them in butter and syrup, kiss the top of my head, and say, "Eat, my sweet girl. You need brain fuel to take on the day."

Then she'd hand me a lunchbox that always had a note inside. As a young girl, I cared more about the notes than the food. Each day, she wrote something different.

You are brave.

Strength is beauty.

You are special.

You are loved.

Be bold.

Beauty comes from within.

I miss her so much I have to choke back a sob. Of course, Atlas notices, his head snapping at me with a look of interest. He doesn't say anything, but I know he knows.

He doesn't know what I'm feeling or thinking. But he knows it hurts. Atlas offers me a tiny smile that doesn't reach his big, brown eyes, and then his attention returns to his book. He's been doing that nonstop. I'm dying to know what's so important he can't eat without drawing.

"Ophelia," Athena says in a singsong tone that makes me want to stab her with my fork. "How would you like to accompany me to pick out your bridesmaid dress?"

I want to say that I would rather remove my eyeballs with this fork, clutching it in my fist like a weapon.

"I can't," I lie, forcing a smile that hurts my face. "My schedule is packed from now until the wedding. Pick a dress for me. I'm sure it will be acceptable."

"I would rather you try it on," she insists. "The seamstress needs your exact measurements."

I hate going dress shopping. They never have my *exact* size, and because I'm a little bigger than average, it always costs more. With the size of my boobs, dresses are either too big or the girls are falling out of the top.

"We can help you try it on," Ares whispers in my ear, sliding his hand to my knee.

I push his hand away, hating how my stupid body responds to him. He's barely touched me, and I have to clench my thighs. "No thanks. Keep your inked hands to yourself."

"Phe," Dad says when I don't answer his new bride. "This is important. Please make time."

"Honestly, Dad, I would rather get this all over with and return to my normal life. I don't care what dress I wear."

“This *is* the new normal.” He grits his teeth, anger flaring in his dark eyes. “Get on board, or we will have a problem.”

Another threat.

Asshole.

Why is he so pussy-whipped that he will cast his only daughter aside for her? For *them*. He acts like I should be happy to have a family again. But I want the one I already had, not my mother’s traitorous best friend and her wicked sons.

I hold his gaze and say, “I’m still adjusting to you marrying Mom’s best friend and moving her sons into our house. This is a lot to take in, okay?” I lift the cloth napkin off my lap and chuck it onto the table—because it feels good to fling shit when I’m mad. “Maybe I would get on board if you’d get off my back!”

“Ophelia Cora Drakos,” he says, shaking with anger, his cheeks flushed. “If I have to tell you one more time to behave yourself, you can kiss the clubs goodbye.”

Motherfucker.

“Threatening me won’t help me accept this situation any sooner, *Dad*.” I rise from the chair, heart pounding in my chest. “You know what? I don’t need you or your money.” I kick my chair backward with my boot. “How about I go down to Kallidromo and see how much the daughter of the great and all-knowing Belen Drakos is worth at auction? I bet your enemies would pay good money to stick it to you.”

“I know I would,” Ares mutters.

Dad is out of his chair in seconds. “Ophelia, I don’t know what’s gotten into you, but I will do whatever is necessary to keep you from hurting yourself. Even if that means sending you away.”

I’m done with this shit.

I attempt to leave, and Apollo pushes out his palm, stopping me dead in my tracks.

“Don’t go. You will regret walking away from your father.”

I want to ask why until I remember his father is dead and wonder if his last conversation ended this badly. Of his brothers, Apollo is the most grounded. While Atlas has his head in the clouds and Ares has his head up his ass, Apollo is always in control. You would think he was the oldest with how he carries himself.

I turn to look at my father. “I will shop for a dress with Athena and go through the motions of this wedding and sing Kumbaya if I have to, but I want you to sign over your stake in Olympus to me.”

Uncle Alexander owns the other half. I’d rather be in business with him than have my father hold my future over my head.

“No,” Dad says without consideration. “You’ll inherit Olympus after I retire and not a minute sooner.”

I have to reason with him.

Losing me is a bad idea.

“If I leave, so will my girls,” I tell him. “I hired them, and they are loyal to me.”

He snorts with laughter. “Whores are a dime a dozen, Ophelia. They can be easily replaced.”

“Not *my* whores,” I fire back. “Our customers love them. I hand-selected them myself. If you ever came by Olympus, you would see that our regulars are there for *them*. They can go to any other club in the city, but they choose The O Club because of the environment I created. They come to fuck the girls I trained.”

His eyes widen at the last part.

Yep, Dad, I said trained.

Deal with it.

“I’d like to see this training firsthand,” Ares mutters, and I want to slap him.

I know how this sounds.

I swear I’m not a pimp.

The ground floor of Olympus is open to the public. We have top-shelf liquor, VIP seating, and the hottest DJs in the country playing live every night. But downstairs at The O Club, we cater to a wealthy clientele.

The women are there willingly, of course. I'm not in the business of human trafficking. But as their Madam, I show them what men want.

"I have a counterproposal," Dad says after a long silence. "You have one month to turn around your attitude. That means acting like you're part of this family and treating Athena and me with respect. You will go dress shopping and pose for photos at our wedding. I don't want to hear a single complaint from you. And if you have learned to control yourself, I will give you one-quarter of Olympus."

One month.

I can do this.

I flash a victorious smile. "When do we go dress shopping?"

Chapter Sixteen

ATLAS

I LIKE SKETCHING *HER*. WHEN OPHELIA DOESN'T KNOW I'M watching, she lowers her guard. She lets me see her worries, frustrations, and insecurities. Apollo picked up on her biggest insecurity, and so did I.

She doesn't see herself the way I do. I bet she doesn't like the woman she sees when she looks in the mirror. But what's not to like about her? She's classically beautiful in an old movie star kind of way. That's why I drew her as a pinup girl.

Not to sexualize her.

To empower her.

Apollo gets it. My twin is an empath like me and understands people, while Ares only understands *Ares*. He's all about the quick fuck and the easy money. And for that reason, we have to protect Ophelia from him.

I watch her interact with Ares, slapping his arm to push him away. She hates him. But I can also see a burning attraction.

As they go back and forth, pretending they don't like each other, my charcoal pencil glides across the page of the sketchbook. Ophelia's big, brown eyes widen as Ares whispers in her ear.

She hits him again.

This time with her elbow.

He comes back with another retort, and surprisingly, she smiles. She has a beautiful smile that reaches her eyes and lights up her face. My brother must have stopped saying stupid shit. Because now, she's practically glowing and leaning into Ares's arm.

He touches her thigh.

She bites her lip.

He bites his.

She looks away.

They're going to fuck.

It's inevitable.

Apollo glances over my shoulder and watches me draw, tapping his fingers on my chair. "I see you're obsessed with her, too."

Ignoring my twin, I add the tiny mole above her lip, capturing every detail of her face. I've only lived in this house for one week and have dozens of pages filled with Ophelia.

"Focus," Apollo says in a hushed tone. "We're not here for her. She doesn't have to get hurt."

I nod. "I'm not the one who needs a reminder." My eyes dart to Ares. "As usual, he can't control himself."

"I'll handle Ares," he whispers. "Just stick to the plan."

Belen is our target, not his daughter. We watched her for months before coming here. Ophelia isn't a snake like her father. Her employees respect her because she's fair, loyal, and honest.

Not her father, though.

"After the show Ophelia and Belen just put on," Apollo says in my ear, keeping his voice low, "we need to escalate our plans."

One month.

Our new timeline.

I nod to agree.

After breakfast, Ophelia leans over the back of my chair, her sweet perfume creating a cloud around me. “We can talk in the sitting room when you finish drawing.”

I snap the book shut before she can get a good look at the page. “Yeah, sure.” Tucking the pencil behind my ear, I push my chair out from the table. “I’m ready now.”

Apollo’s cell phone rings, and he exits the dining room with his hand raised, gesturing that he will see me later. My twin spends most of his days staring at numbers or on the phone with investors.

I like to create things.

His mind works differently from mine. We have almost no similarities, apart from our dark hair and the same Roman nose. Most people can’t even tell we’re twins.

I have a baby face that Ma still pinches because she forgets I’m twenty-four and not five. Apollo has a sharper jaw and fuller lips. He looks and acts more sophisticated and refined. My brother is also whip-smart and doesn’t have a single tattoo.

While Ares and I are covered in ink, Apollo won’t get one—not even the art I drew for him. It’s a darker take on the Gemini symbol made from olive leaves. The same leaves the ancient Greeks used to create *kotinos* for the winners of the Olympic Games.

We were born on May twenty-third. It’s our astrological symbol. I got the tattoo on my forearm, and Apollo pussied out. Ares and I have almost every Greek myth sketched onto our bodies. We don’t agree on much aside from our love of ink.

I follow Ophelia into the sitting room and recall the night we met when she threatened us with a gun. Nothing says *welcome to the family* like almost getting your dick blown off.

Ophelia sits in the armchair by the fireplace, her legs clad in dark jeans. She’s completely covered up despite the heat outside. I can see Ares struck a nerve when he called her fat. But he didn’t mean it like that. He’s just a fucking moron.

She paired the jeans with a three-quarter length blouse that covers her stomach, but with the size of her tits, she shows tons of cleavage.

I take the chair beside her, resting the sketchbook on my knee. If I ever have children, they will come second to this book. It's leather-bound with removable pages. My dad gave it to me on my birthday, the last one before he died.

Ophelia crosses her legs, giving me a sweet but seductive smile. I don't think she realizes how sexy she is without trying.

"So," she says softly, "what do you want to show me?"

I flip through my sketchbook to the correct page and put it on the table for her to see.

"You're talented," she says as she leans over to review the new logo designs. "These are incredible."

She only found out about our parents' engagement last week. But my brothers and I have known for a while. Her father had asked me to start working on the marketing materials after he slipped a giant rock onto Mom's hand.

Belen has been going out of his way to make us like him. He's so desperate for our affection that he's too blind to see what's right in front of him.

We're going to *crush* him.

Reclaim our birthright.

Bleed him dry.

"Which one do you prefer?" I ask Ophelia.

She points at the logo for Olympus with the dark clouds and custom Greek lettering. "This one is my favorite."

Then she turns the page, and before I can stop her, she's staring at herself. The pinup girl with the high-waisted panties and corset, her big tits spilling out of the top. She spreads her legs wide, hands on her knees. A seductive look tugs at her beautiful face, a look that says, *Come fuck me*.

But there's more to the story.

Her head is tilted to the side, trying to look away from the viewer. She's uncomfortable with herself and moves one arm back to conceal part of her stomach, even though the panties mostly hide it.

I see *her*.

All of her strengths.

Weaknesses.

Ophelia doesn't breathe or move, keeping her eyes on the page. If I were Ares, I would shake it off and use the awkward situation to get into her panties. Apollo would give her the diplomatic answer and try to charm her.

Not me.

"This is how I wish you saw yourself. Powerful. Sexy. But also vulnerable." I rip the page from the book and hand it to her. "You should keep it as a reminder."

She clutches the paper to her chest, mouth hanging open in shock. Her eyes close for a moment, fingers tightening on the page. I can't tell if she's going to cry or punch me. And then, she gets up from the chair and rushes out of the room.

Chapter Seventeen

OPHELIA

I'M STILL TRYING TO CATCH MY BREATH WHEN I ENTER MY bedroom. The stack of pancakes I loaded with sugar sits heavy on my stomach. But I have more important things to worry about than my waistline.

Like Atlas Demetriou.

This is how I wish you saw yourself. Powerful. Sexy. But also vulnerable.

I can't get his words out of my head.

Powerful.

Sure.

But sexy?

No.

Vulnerable.

Hell, yes.

The night they moved into the house, Ares called me sexy before he violated me with my gun and almost made me come. They have to be fucking with my head, using my insecurities to mess with me.

I stare at the page in my trembling hand, memorizing every inch of my body.

It's me but... not me?

Atlas drew me like a pinup girl from the 40s. My breasts are stuffed into a corset, making my stomach appear slimmer because my boobs steal the show. They're pretty big, so that part is accurate. And with them taking up so much space, paired with the high-waisted panties that partially cover my stomach, I look sexy.

I would cry if Atlas drew me with all my flab hanging out. Instead, my eyes are filled with tears of happiness.

This is how I wish you saw yourself.

Which means he sees me this way. Atlas thinks I'm powerful and sexy.

With my thighs spread, I lean forward in the picture, resting my hands on my knees. I look like someone else. Seeing my face staring back at me with a seductive smile is weird.

I love it.

This is the best present anyone has ever given me. So I search the hallway closet for a picture frame. My mom kept a stash for all her portraits hanging on the walls. She loved art and was one of the state's most prominent collectors before she passed.

I find a frame and run back to my room. Dad rarely comes here, so I don't hide the picture and set it on the desk. A reminder that I am powerful *and* sexy. I smile so hard my cheeks hurt.

It's perfect.

Now feeling foolish for leaving so abruptly, I head back downstairs. Atlas is still in the sitting room. He's curled up on the couch by the window, the sketchbook propped up on his thighs. His head is bent, those long, tattooed fingers gliding across the paper.

I could watch him all day.

He must hear my heels click on the tile because his head snaps at me. His black hair is messy as if he's been shoving his fingers through it.

“Thank you,” I say.

He doesn't look like he's going to respond.

Always studying me.

Watching me.

Sketching me.

“I shouldn't have walked out on you.” I sit on the couch beside him. “I kind of panicked.” Feeling compelled to explain myself, I add, “I had no idea anyone could ever see me like that.”

A moment of careful deliberation ensues as he considers my words. Then he slides his feet off the couch and scoots closer to me.

“Which parts don't you see?”

I shrug. “All of it, I guess. I've never felt...”

I can't even bring myself to say the word aloud.

He raises one eyebrow, tapping the pencil on the paper. “Sexy?”

I bite my lip and nod.

“Watching you handle my brothers...” He shakes his head, a smile stretching the corners of his mouth. “Especially Ares? It's hot.”

“What can I say? I'm a bitch,” I toss back to protect myself, one of the many lies I tell. “That doesn't make me sexy.”

His brown eyes meet mine, and I feel so exposed when he looks at me. Like Atlas can see straight into my soul. “I only draw what I see.”

Be still, heart.

The vein in my neck throbs like it's about to poke a hole through my skin. My ears are practically ringing from how hard my heart pounds.

“Do you want to review the marketing materials for Olympus?”

He nods and flips through his sketchbook, placing it on our thighs. With Atlas this close, I can feel his body heat. Smell the hint of citrus in his cologne. Our thighs nearly touch, and I suddenly get the urge to reach over and kiss him.

I don't.

But I want to.

He's given me the greatest gift of my life.

Confidence.

Atlas leans over, his fingers brushing each page as he flips them for me. I stare at the ink on his skin and take in his designs. Everything he creates is a work of art, even his tattoos.

I'm amazed by his talent. His sketches are so creative, every line and curve dripping with inspiration.

"Your work is incredible." I smile, and his expression mirrors mine. "Have you ever thought about creating a comic book series? Or writing a graphic novel? These are seriously incredible."

He shakes his head, and his dark hair drops in front of his eyes. His hair is the longest of his brothers and flops onto his forehead.

"You should think about it," I tell him. "I bet you could make a lot of money telling stories with your art."

He doesn't answer me.

Just stares.

I can't tell what he thinks when he looks at me this way. He inspects my face, searching for something I bet I don't see. That's his hidden talent. Atlas understands people and can draw out all of their flaws. But he's also good at revealing what's inside a person.

I like that he's quiet because I can breathe around him. We don't fill the void with awkward conversation, which is nice. I'm usually not a big talker, anyway.

So I point at his designs and offer my opinions on the best ones for each club. My father owns dozens of nightclubs, strip clubs, and bars across Beacon Bay. All of them have a social media presence and have ongoing weekly promotions.

Monica would have handled this. But our marketing guru quit two weeks ago after one of the bouncers broke up with her. So that left me to clean up the mess.

Atlas covers every aspect of our marketing. After I pick the designs, he reviews his plans to improve our social media presence. Then, we discuss the changes he thinks we should make to our websites. The list goes on until my head is spinning.

I like to manage people. This side of the business never appealed to me, so I hired an expert. And now, that person is my soon-to-be stepbrother.

My stepbrother.

I hate saying that word aloud or in my head. No matter how I say it, I want to punch a hole through the wall. Mom's barely been gone long enough for her perfume to dissipate from the house. Yet, every inch of this space reminds me of her.

Dad is replacing her.

Our home now smells like Athena and the thick scent of her sons' cologne. Everything is the same. The furniture, the artwork on the walls, the schedules of my father's men as they enter the house each morning and night.

Yet, it's different.

Tainted.

After discussing work, I glance at the black ink on Atlas's forearms. "Do you draw your tattoos?"

Atlas nods. "I would never let someone ink me with their art. No artist with any self-respect would."

"I'm guessing you've drawn Ares's tattoos, too." Settling into the cushion beside Atlas, I lower my guard and inch

closer to him. “I noticed he has a lot of them. But Apollo doesn’t have any.”

“Because Apollo is too much of a prude. He thinks tattoos will make him look *less* like he went to Yale and *more* like a thug.”

“I’ve never gotten a tattoo,” I say in what I think sounds like a sultry tone. “But I’d get one if you drew it for me.”

“Yeah?” Atlas grins. “Your body is the perfect canvas for my art.”

Chapter Eighteen

ATLAS DODGES MY PUNCHES, KEEPING HIS GLOVES IN FRONT OF his face. He's always on defense, afraid of taking a hit. But he's not a terrible trainer. After he gets in a quick jab that I sidestep, I land a hook to his jaw. It's a love tap, not a punch meant to hurt him.

"Asshole," he swears, shaking off the hit. "Always going for the cheap shot."

I shrug, gloves raised. "Dad taught me to seize every opportunity."

We're at Akropolis, which I spelled incorrectly, and Apollo will never let me forget it. But the name of my fight club stuck. I got the idea from the Acropolis of Athens and named it in honor of our mother.

Apollo helps with the finances, while Atlas handles the promotions. Within a few months of our partnering, I had a legit business.

Until Belen Drakos.

I bet on the wrong fight and wagered money I didn't have. So now, I got Alexander breathing down my neck. If I don't throw my next fight, I'll have to sell my club to pay him.

My dad would be proud of how far I've come. If only the old man were still here to see it. From an early age, I wanted to become a boxer. Dad noticed I wasn't like my brothers. I kept getting into fights and came home with bruises. So, our father tailored his parenting approach to fit our needs.

While Apollo had his head in a book and Atlas was creating art, I wanted to hit something—or, more accurately, someone. So, Dad cultivated a safe space for us to nurture what we were good at.

He built a boxing gym in the basement of our home and taught me how to fight. Apollo got a library and a private school education. And Atlas had a drawing room with comfy couches and drafting tables. We had a sweet life before Belen Drakos destroyed it.

After we're done sparring, Atlas spits his mouthguard onto the floor. Slobber drips from the corner of his mouth and onto his bare chest. "You're not fighting at your full potential, Ares. Is Ophelia fucking with your head?"

"Hell no," I fire back, working to strip off my right glove. "I'm just tired. That's all."

My brother shakes his head, and dark waves fall in front of his honey-brown eyes we share. "Ophelia is on your mind. I can tell."

"So what if she is?" I peel back the tape around my hand, leaning against the ropes. "I'm planning to tap that ass before the wedding. And every day after that." I give him a wicked smirk. "I know you want to fuck her. Don't even try to bullshit me, little bro."

He rips off his gloves and tosses them out of the ring. "Apollo will want *us* to fuck Ophelia. He looks at her like he's thinking about watching us with her."

Our brother has a dirty little secret, one I doubt he wants Ophelia to discover. We're the only people who know why Apollo can't get off with a woman.

I wave off his concern. "Apollo won't do anything that jeopardizes us getting closer to why Belen killed Dad. And it's not like he would let Ophelia touch him. He'd puke if she put her hand on his arm."

It has nothing to do with Ophelia. This problem started a long time ago with no signs of improvement. We begged Apollo to get help from a therapist after *that* night. I even

suggested he come home from Yale and attend a local college. He insisted on finishing his degree because it was what our father wanted.

But if our dad knew what happened, he would never have let Apollo stay on campus. Not with that psychopath who I would gladly kill for my brother if he would only tell me a name.

“We can’t mix pleasure with revenge, Ares.” Atlas ducks under the ropes and hops down from the ring. “We both know you’ll get sick of her after you fuck her once. And Apollo will probably scare her away.”

Apollo chooses most of the women we fuck. It’s part of this sick game we play. Our brother has particular desires, and we never tell him no because of his affliction.

I follow Atlas out of the ring and laugh in his face. “You got some nerve when you’ve got a crush on her.” My eyes flick to his sketchbook on the table beside my water bottle. “Have you been jerking off to the pornographic images you’re drawing of our stepsister?”

He doesn’t answer.

That’s a yes.

“I won’t get sick of Ophelia. So stop lecturing me. You sound like Apollo.”

“Whether we like it or not, we’re stuck with the Drakos.” He twists off the top of the water bottle and takes a swig. “If either of you screws this up for us, I’m walking away. I mean it this time.”

He would never leave us. Atlas has threatened to abandon us to get his way dozens of times. Unlike me, he’s less on board with Apollo’s games. I don’t have an issue with letting Apollo choose the girls or telling us how he wants us to fuck them.

Atlas used to be okay with it. But something has changed since Mom got engaged, and we moved in with the Drakos. Maybe it’s his not-so-secret obsession with Ophelia.

Does he want her for himself?

“You should push the fight back until after the wedding,” Atlas says on our way into the locker room. “Mom will lose her shit if your face is fucked up in her pictures.”

“It’s not like she gives a shit about Belen,” I throw back at him as I push open the door. “She’s only marrying the piece of shit to help us avenge Dad.”

She also needs the money. Once Belen is gone, our mother will inherit everything—including the shares in his businesses Ophelia desperately wants.

She has one month to change her attitude if she wants to own a quarter of Olympus. But if Apollo does his job correctly, we’ll be rid of Belen before then. Apollo is the mastermind of this operation and schemed with our mother.

Atlas grabs a towel from the rack. “We need to get closer to Ophelia. It’s the only way she’ll believe the truth when this is over.”

Ophelia is part of the deal our mother made with Cora Drakos before her death. The letter is real. Despite what Ophelia believes, our mother didn’t force her mom to write it.

I bob my head to agree. “What do you think I’m doing? Neither of you is getting anywhere with her.”

He shakes his head. “Not true. I gave Ophelia one of my drawings. You should have seen her face. I thought she was going to cry.”

“Sounds like we got a good thing going,” I comment as we make our way to the showers. “Work your magic with your art, and I’ll convince her with my tongue and cock that she *needs* us.”

Our mother marrying Belen is only the beginning. Apollo spent months analyzing every detail, planning our revenge to the second. But that was before Ophelia. She’s sexy and gets under my skin, and I don’t want her to get hurt.

Neither do my brothers.

“I’ll do my part,” I tell him as I turn on the shower. “You do yours. Mom and Apollo will take care of the rest.”

Chapter Nineteen

OPHELIA

ONE MONTH. I CAN LAST UNTIL MY FATHER MARRIES MY EVIL stepmother if it means getting a legitimate stake in Olympus. Before my mother died, I liked Athena. She was like a second mother to me.

I can pretend.

Be civil.

Smile.

Athena waits for me in the sitting room. To my surprise, Atlas is with her, drawing in his sketchbook. I rarely see him without a charcoal pencil in his inked hand.

What is he doing here?

“I thought this was a girl’s day,” I say to Athena as if we’re best friends.

She glides over to me, her movements fluid, even in five-inch heels. As usual, she’s dressed impeccably in a champagne-colored wrap dress, making her black hair look even more stunning against her olive skin.

“Atlas is in our bridal party.” She grips my shoulder as we exit the room. “I didn’t think you would mind him tagging along.”

Yeah, sure.

I love getting measured in front of hot men I barely know. Especially men who draw me and say cute things that make

me hate that he'll be my stepbrother.

“No, I don't mind,” I lie as we leave the house with Atlas on our heels. “Let's go.”

He's so quiet, always observing. The time we spent together a few days ago was the most I have heard from him. Unlike Ares, he keeps to himself and doesn't push my buttons.

Atlas rushes past us and hops into the driver's side of a black Mercedes G-Class. The sleek SUV suits him.

The Audi A8 belongs to Apollo. Of course, Ares drives the vintage Camaro SS, red with black racing stripes. I think about Ares fucking me on the hood of that car. A shiver jolts down my arms. Maybe I like doing bad things more than I should. Because even though I pretend to hate Ares, I can't stop thinking about what he did to me in my bedroom.

His hands on my body.

His tongue on my pussy.

I want my stepbrother.

Athena climbs into the front seat, and I get in the back. I cringe at the thought of being trapped in this box with them. But when Atlas turns on the car and cranks up the classical music blaring through the speakers, I let out a relieved breath.

Surprisingly, Athena doesn't tell him to turn down the music. She must like the classics. I find it relaxing as we drive through Beacon Bay. I imagine Atlas listening to Beethoven or Chopin while he sketches me, adding to his collection .

We arrive at the bridal shop. It's on the North Side, the part of Beacon Bay where I live. Wealthier residents own houses within walking distance of the town square.

My dad's businesses are mainly on the South Side, where it's grittier and has fewer residential properties. He gained control over Beacon Bay because of the cheap commercial real estate on that side of town. No one wants to live there, not unless they don't have a choice. So he seized the opportunity.

After buying properties, he became the Godfather of the Night within five years. I stood to inherit everything before he

announced his engagement to Athena. Dad has been threatening to disown me.

What if he does?

I push down the thought as we enter Bridal Couture, greeted by a lithe, blonde-haired woman. She's the opposite of me, skinny with light features and practically glowing. Atlas doesn't pay any mind to her. His fingers clutch the sketchbook at his side, and I notice him fidgeting like he's dying to draw something.

"Hello," the woman beams after speaking to Athena, her eyes aimed at me. "You must be Ophelia." She leans in to hug me as if we're old friends, and I stand there, inwardly cringing. "I'm Layla." She steps back and smiles. "Athena gave me your estimated size over the phone."

Kill me now.

I glance at Atlas and find his eyes on me. He doesn't turn away and holds my gaze with a thoughtful expression on his handsome face.

What is he thinking?

I wish I could read him.

Atlas is more of a mystery than his brothers. It feels like he's saying a lot without opening his mouth. Long lashes brush his skin, setting off those big, brown eyes. He's so gorgeous I can't tear my eyes away. Not until Athena clutches my arm, stealing my attention back to her.

"Ophelia," she says in a soft tone. "Try on the size sixteen first to see if it fits. If you need a bigger size, let Layla know."

And just like that, my bubble bursts. I'm sensitive about my weight and hate trying on clothes around other people.

Why did she invite Atlas?

He shouldn't be here.

Why would a man even want to come dress shopping for a wedding? This can't be that exciting for him. He hasn't spoken

more than a few words to confirm something his mother asked.

Yes.

No.

Sure.

He doesn't say all that much, even when he does speak. But I like hearing his deep voice. It reminds me of the feeling I get when waves crash on the beach. A little shiver races over me.

"Would you like a glass of champagne?" Layla asks us.

"That would be lovely." Athena smiles. "We'll each have a glass."

"None for me," Atlas says.

"Darling, it's a special day. Live a little."

He rolls his eyes, keeping his coveted book at his side, which only makes me long for the day when I see more of his sketches. "It's eleven o'clock on a Tuesday, Ma. I have to work later."

Atlas owns The River Styx, a local watering hole on the South Side.

"Nonsense," Athena groans. "You'll have one glass with us to celebrate."

I remember Athena being a little extra, but until she moved into my house, I hadn't realized how much of a pain in the ass she could be.

Was all of that an act?

Is this the real Athena?

Chapter Twenty

OPHELIA

LAYLA RETURNS WITH A TRAY OF CHAMPAGNE FLUTES AND hands one to each of us. Atlas begrudgingly accepts the glass. I take one—because why not? I might as well get drunk enough to forget this day ever happened.

We clink our glasses together and drink. My dad is marrying Mom's best friend. I repeat the words in my head several times as I down the champagne in one gulp. I'm so angry with my father that I see red. Black dots swim across my eyes, making it harder to see. My chest hurts, and I don't understand why.

Everything hurts.

My head spins.

I see more dots.

Atlas wraps his fingers around my wrist. "Ophelia."

I hear him.

See him.

I blink.

His long fingers brush my skin. "If you squeeze any tighter, you'll shatter the glass."

My eyes lower to our joined hands, and I see what he means. The color is drained from my right hand.

Fuck.

Get it together, O.

“Are you okay?” Atlas peels the flute from my hand. “You look like you’re about to explode.”

“Huh?” I blink a few times and focus on his eyes, which calms down my racing heart. “I’m fine.”

Athena is busy talking to Layla about the wedding and sharing her plans. I could give a rat’s ass about the details of her *special* day.

“You don’t look fine.” Atlas sets our glasses on the table and guides me toward a plush couch. He forces me to sit and drops to the cushion beside me. “Take a deep breath, Ophelia.”

I stare.

Blink.

Breathe.

“One more,” he says in a calm tone. “Breathe through your nose, hold it for a few seconds, and blow it out through your mouth.”

My vision is still slightly blurred. And my heart feels like it’s about to crash through my chest. The last few minutes are a blur. After I toasted my father’s upcoming nuptials, I went somewhere else.

Did I black out?

“I have everything ready for you,” Layla says. “You’re in room number three.”

I keep my head down and focus on my breathing.

“We’ll find it ourselves,” Atlas tells her. “Give us a minute.”

“Sure thing,” Layla lilts.

“Is everything okay?” Athena asks with a hint of concern in her tone. “You don’t look well, sweetie.”

I used to like it when she called me that. It sounded cute coming from Auntie Athena. But now, her nickname churns the food in my stomach, and I want to vomit.

“Yeah, Ma. We’re fine,” Atlas answers for me. “Ophelia just needs a minute, okay?”

Athena nods, lips pressed together, then follows Layla to her dressing room. We sit silently for a minute, with me breathing and Atlas chewing on his bottom lip. He’s not good at filling the silence, and I don’t mind that he’s shy.

I think it’s cute.

Layla is busy with Athena, who I hear talking loudly about how this is her second wedding and wants it to be perfect.

“I’m ready,” I say after a few minutes. “Let’s get this over with.”

Atlas shocks me by grabbing my hand and guiding me to Room 3. Inside, a handful of dresses are hanging on a rack. I enter the dressing room and stare at the beautiful gowns. It’s an early fall wedding, and the weather is still nice. So Athena chose various shades of peach, mauve, cabernet, and dusty rose.

“Take your pick,” Athena says from her room at the end of the hallway. “Whatever color you prefer, Ophelia.”

I like darker colors. Anything that conceals more of my curves and makes my waistline look slimmer. From eyeing them up, I’m confident the cabernet dress will win.

“I’ll wait over there.” Atlas points at an armchair to my left. “If you start to have another panic attack, say my name.”

“I didn’t have a panic attack.”

“I’ve seen Apollo have plenty of them,” he admits. “You were having one.” His hand touches my back, and at first, I jump. He continues rubbing my back, and I let him. “I know this is hard for you. But it’s going to be okay.”

“Do you want our parents to get married?”

He shakes his head. “It doesn’t matter what I want. My mom is happy with Belen.”

“Yeah,” I agree. “I haven’t seen my dad smile in over a year. Not since before my mom got the cancer diagnosis.”

“This wedding isn’t about us.” He rubs more soothing circles on my back, gazing into my eyes like he wants to kiss me. “We’re going to be a family whether we like it or not.”

A quick moment passes between us, and as if he realizes this is getting too intense, he lowers his hand. Then he steps back a few inches until his back almost touches the wall. We have plenty of distance between us now.

Atlas sits in the armchair and sets the leather sketchbook on his lap. He flips open to a new page and grabs the charcoal pencil from behind his ear.

His hands are never idle.

As I close the door, I miss his body heat. I want those inked hands on my body again, and I hate myself for how much I crave him.

I try to forget about Atlas and strip out of my clothes, setting aside the jeans and blouse on the bench. The first two dresses are okay but not flattering. Peach is a definite no and goes in the pass pile. Dusty rose is another no and looks nearly see-through on my stomach. Even if they were darker colors, my cleavage falls out of the low-cut tops.

What is Athena thinking?

I got my boobs from my mom. It’s not like she doesn’t know the women in my family have big breasts. The dark mauve is pretty, and so is the cabernet. I know those will be my favorites. Most of my clothes are darker colors.

I slip into the mauve dress first, then the cabernet. Atlas was right about this wedding not being about us. Even if we don’t like it, our parents are happy. And if my mom wanted them to be together after her death, then who am I to deny them?

I love my dad. Athena has never done anything other than treat me like her daughter. So, it’s time to set aside my feelings and be happy, even if I have to pretend, even if my heart breaks watching them say their vows.

It’s not about me.

I choose the A-line cabernet dress and reach behind me to zip it. But my arm isn't long enough, so I do a weird dance that goes nowhere.

Annoyed, I give up and open the door. Of course, Atlas is drawing in his book, his fingers zipping across the page.

I clear my throat.

He looks up.

“Can you help me?” I feel stupid but turn around anyway, pointing at the back of my dress. “I can't reach.”

He slips the charcoal pencil behind his ear and leaves the sketchbook on the chair. His hand falls to my back, pushing me into the dressing room.

The door shuts.

My breathing quickens.

Atlas zips the dress, and I look at him in the mirror, his eyes carefully taking in my body as if he likes what he sees.

“You look beautiful, Ophelia.”

“I look acceptable,” I joke.

He spins me around, pushing my back to the mirror, and then his hands are on my face. His fingers stroke my cheeks. “Stop worrying about what people think. A woman as beautiful as you should feel comfortable in anything.”

Atlas is good with words.

He rarely uses them, but my heart does a summersault when he does. I feel special when we're together.

Powerful.

Sexy.

I still think about what he said when he handed me the sketch I framed. Every day since, I have looked at my picture and wondered how he could see me like that. How could someone else see something I never could?

I suck in a deep breath and look away from him. He leans forward and strokes the pads of his thumbs across my cheeks.

“Look at me, Ophelia.”

My eyes meet his.

I expect him to say something. To tell me I’m beautiful again. Instead, his lips lightly brush mine. My lips part for him, but he doesn’t push his tongue into my mouth or even try.

Atlas smells like charcoal, champagne, and mint toothpaste. It’s an unusual mixture, but I like his scent because it’s unique to him. A chill runs through my body as his lips touch mine once more.

He licks along the seam of my mouth, his movements the exact opposite of his brother’s. Ares claims me like a king trying to conquer a new land. But not Atlas. He wants to take his time and explore.

“Are you doing okay in there?” Layla asks from the other side of the door.

Define okay.

“Yes,” I lie.

Atlas steps back as if the bubble surrounding us has burst into a million pieces. Our small moment in time is over. I can already see him retreating into his head.

“Perfect.” I can hear the smile on Layla’s perky face behind the closed door. “I’ll be out front helping a customer if you need me.”

The second Layla disappears, Atlas leaves the room as if nothing happened.

Chapter Twenty-One

OPHELIA

I'M BECOMING GOOD AT PRETENDING. WHEN WE EAT breakfast as a family, I smile and stuff my face with food. Ares passes me the syrup. Apollo tells me to eat more. And Atlas draws me.

I can't see his sketchbook, but I know that's what he's doing. He looks up, his eyes on me for a second before he's back to sketching.

We haven't discussed how he kissed me in the dressing room. Or the sweet things he said to me. Ares has been equally distant. Since the night Ares climbed into my bed, he hasn't returned. None of them have been around much, busy with their own lives.

It's nice.

Like old times.

I'm getting more peace and don't feel like I always have to keep my guard up. So when Athena asks me to help her choose flowers for the wedding, I smile and say yes.

Faking is easier than I thought. Now I understand why so many women at The O Club can do it each night. My girls make our members believe they want their hands all over their skin. Each moan is a performance. They must shut out their thoughts as I do and let their body take over.

Dad and Athena leave for a late dinner with friends. The same friends who once knew them as separate entities. It must be weird for them, too.

I open the fridge and take out a carton of strawberries. A little snack to keep me going before I leave for the club.

Leaning against the counter, I bite into the berry and chuck the top into the trash. I eat a few more and put the carton back into the refrigerator. When I turn around, Ares stands in the entryway.

I stare.

Blink.

Lick my lips.

“What’s on your mind, little dragon?”

Ares walks into the kitchen, dressed in black-and-gold boxing trunks that hang low on his narrow hips. He’s shirtless, his ripped body covered in black ink, those big muscles flexing as he grips the towel over his shoulder.

I think I might be drooling, so I swipe my finger across my lip and turn away from him. “Apollo isn’t home yet, and we have to leave for Olympus in ten minutes.”

After striking a deal with my father, I agreed to behave. That means bringing Apollo to the club with me and showing him the ropes. He’s only supposed to get involved with the finances. I could care less since Uncle Alexander always handled that side of the business.

“Apollo just called,” Atlas says as he enters the room wearing dark blue jeans with graffiti on them and a fitted white shirt that looks like something he designed. “He’s on his way home. Should be here any minute.”

Home.

It still sounds weird to hear them call my house their home. But that’s the truth. In two weeks, they will be my stepbrothers. And we’ll be one big happy family.

“Are you fighting tonight?” I ask Ares since we have barely spoken all week.

“Yep.” He closes the distance between us, grabs my shirt, and pulls me to him. “Do I get a kiss for good luck?”

I glance at Atlas. He's sitting at the kitchen table, watching us with curiosity. His eyebrows raise an inch. He's wondering if I'll kiss his brother.

"I don't know," I tell Ares. "Do you really want a kiss from your stepsister?"

"I wouldn't have asked if I didn't." His grip tightens on my shirt, his lips inches from mine. "It's good luck to get a kiss from a beautiful woman before a fight."

"So if I don't kiss you, you'll turn around and kiss someone else?"

His lips brush mine. "You're so stubborn, woman. Shut up and kiss me."

I press my lips to his. As our tongues tangle, it feels like we're fighting a war. We both know what we're doing is fucked up.

Sick.

We shouldn't have started this game. But after Ares left my room that night, I used the dirty memory to get myself off. I still dream about his rough touch when I'm alone.

"Ophelia."

The front door slams.

Uncle Alexander.

Shit.

I shove my palms into Ares's chest, knocking him backward and gasping for air. "Get out of here."

Ares frowns. "You don't like how I kiss you?"

"No, it's not that," I whisper. "I don't want my uncle to see you practically naked when my hair is a mess from you running your fingers through it, and my lips probably look like they've just been kissed." I wave my hand. "Go before he sees you."

Ares groans. "Fine, but this isn't over."

"I'm in the kitchen," I tell my uncle.

It's been weird without Alexander at the club. He mostly stayed upstairs in the office with his friends while I slipped into the basement to cater to The O Club members. But it was nice having him around. Now Apollo has inserted himself into our business.

I haven't seen my uncle since Dad's engagement, which is odd. He usually stops by the house several times a week.

Are they fighting again?

My dad has a bad temper and so does my uncle. They're brothers in name only. My grandparents adopted Alexander three months before getting pregnant with my dad.

Ares and Atlas approach the same door Alexander is entering. They should have used their heads and exited through the chef's entrance that leads to the back staircase.

Dumbasses.

"Hello, my sweet girl," Alexander says with a big ass smile when he sees me, ignoring Ares and Atlas.

My smile mirrors his. "Hey, yourself."

Unlike my dad, my uncle is blond with blue eyes and doesn't look like he has an ounce of Greek in him. Because he doesn't. You would never know he's the infamous Alexander Drakos. He's clean-cut with a sharp jaw and wears suits like a knight does armor.

He slaps Ares on the back and grins. "Are you ready for the fight tonight, Champ?"

Ares glares at him, his top lip quivering as if he's ready to attack. "Born ready."

What am I missing here?

Ares's whole demeanor changed when Alexander entered the kitchen. Atlas looks equally uncomfortable, with his eyes narrowed into slits at my uncle. They're both seething mad at the sight of him.

Interesting.

“I have a lot of money riding on you,” my uncle tells Ares. “Better not disappoint me.”

Something is off about their exchange. Ares looks like he might kill Alexander.

So I move across the room and get between them. “I didn’t know you were into the fight scene.”

“It’s a new hobby.” My uncle shrugs. “A little side business I’m testing out. So far, it’s pretty lucrative.”

Ares’s body stiffens, and his hands are balled into fists at his sides. He gives my uncle a sideways glance and then looks at Atlas. An unspoken conversation occurs between them that doesn’t need words.

“Break a leg, Champ.” Alexander gives him a devious wink that makes me wonder about the hidden meaning of his gesture.

Ares storms out of the kitchen with Atlas in tow.

I stroll over to my uncle. “What was all that about?”

“Nothing.” He bends down to kiss each of my cheeks. “The fight is all everyone in Beacon Bay is talking about.”

“Okay.” I lean against the counter and study his face for a lie. “Why is it such a big deal?”

“Ares is undefeated. His opponent is an up-and-comer in the UFC. He flew in from Las Vegas to fight him.” My uncle pulls out a stool at the kitchen island and points for me to join him. “It’s just business. Ares has built a reputation around his fighting. People come from all over the country to join his fight club.”

He’s playing it cool now that Ares is gone, but I can tell he’s lying. They know each other. My uncle wants Ares to lose the fight.

But why?

I take the seat beside him. “My dad isn’t home. He left about ten minutes ago with Athena for dinner.”

“I’m here to see you.” He rests his elbow on the counter and smiles. “How have you been, Ophelia?”

“Not great,” I admit. “Dad’s been acting strange. I’m trying to adapt to my new life.”

“Your dad isn’t speaking to me.” He shoves the hair off his forehead, a somber expression on his face. “We fought after he told me about the engagement.”

“Same thing happened with us. It’s like he’s under Athena’s spell. I don’t get it.”

“I don’t trust Athena or her boys.” His fingers brush beneath my chin as he gazes into my eyes. “I know you can handle yourself. You’ve proved that much, even if your dad is too blind to see it. But I worry about you. Keep your ears and eyes open.”

I nod. “Of course.”

He lowers his hand to his knee. “Be careful, my sweet girl. Something is wrong with this engagement. Belen told me about the letter your mother wrote to Athena.”

“I read it.”

He cocks an eyebrow at me. “And?”

“It’s in her handwriting.”

He sighs. “I don’t know how Athena got Cora to write that letter, but it’s bullshit. Athena is using your mother to play with a grieving man’s heart. Your dad is the strongest person I know. But I thought your mom’s death would kill him, too.”

“Every night, I heard his screams for months,” I tell my uncle. “I found him drunk on the floor, hugging a liquor bottle. Tip-toed over the broken glass he smashed against the wall in a drunken stupor. We hadn’t eaten more than a handful of meals together since she passed.”

He nods in agreement. “Your dad was in sad shape.”

“And now, he’s a family man again?” My voice cracks as I speak, and the emotions control me. “We have formal meals in the dining room. There are no broken liquor bottles on the

floor. He's smiling and even singing when I see him. This man isn't my dad."

Uncle Alexander takes a deep breath, tapping his fingers on the marble countertop. A gold ring hits the stone with a light thump. "Even before your mom got sick, he was never this happy. Belen Drakos earned the fear and respect of Beacon Bay's criminal underworld. People whisper about him in the streets for a reason."

We stare at each other for a moment and sigh. At least he's confirming what I already thought. My dad is either losing his mind or Athena somehow possesses him.

"I can't talk to him. Dad isn't in the right headspace. But, on the plus side, I got him to agree to sign over a quarter of Olympus to me at the end of the month."

"Oh, yeah?" Alexander leans closer, his musky cologne filling my nostrils. "How did you get him to do that?"

"By pretending I'm happy for him and Athena. I have to be her maid of honor and go through the motions of this wedding." I give a light shrug. "Whatever it takes to get what's owed to me."

"You shouldn't have to go along with this circus." He shakes his head, annoyed with my father. "Belen sent me away to work at the warehouse. He's making you work for what's already yours. It's ridiculous. An insult."

"You own half of Olympus. Why didn't you tell him no?"

"Because," he says with a sad look in his eyes. "I sold it to your father last year when I needed cash."

"What?" My mouth drops open in shock. "Why didn't you tell me?"

"I was embarrassed," he admits. "I had to ask your dad for money and didn't want you looking at me with the same disappointment."

"I would never." I put my hand over the top of his on the counter. "You're my favorite uncle."

He smirks. "I'm your only uncle."

A door slams from a distance, and shoes tap on the tiled floor, so I know it's not Ares or Atlas. They were both wearing sneakers.

Apollo walks into the kitchen, dressed impeccably in a black suit with a red tie. He looks good and smells even better as he approaches us.

“Sorry, I’m late. I got stuck in traffic.”

He extends his hand to Alexander. “Apollo Demetriou.”

“Alexander Drakos.” My uncle shakes his hand, a wicked look in his eyes. After he releases Apollo’s hand, he wipes his palm down the side of his pants with a sneer. “Well, I should be going.”

“We have to get over to Olympus. I’ll see you soon, right?”

“Of course.” Alexander hops up from the stool, staring at Apollo like he wants to murder him. He doesn’t trust Athena and her sons. “Call me if you have any issues. I’m here whenever you need me, sweet girl.”

Chapter Twenty-Two

OPHELIA

APOLLO REMOVES THE KEYS FROM HIS POCKET AND FOLLOWS me to the front door. "I'll drive."

"No, that's okay." I step outside. "Constantine is here."

"You don't need a driver," Apollo insists, shutting the door behind him.

"Constantine is more than my driver," I say in a hushed tone as we walk toward the car, where Constantine waits for me. "He's my bodyguard. So unless you're prepared to take a bullet for me, he's driving us to Olympus."

He raises his hands in surrender. "Fine."

"Good evening, Miss Drakos," Constantine says as we approach the door he holds open for me.

He's only this formal in front of other people. When it's just us, he calls me O.

Constantine is built like a refrigerator and is a former Navy SEAL. He's trained to kill and always protects me. There have been several attempts on my life in the past few years. If not for Constantine, I probably wouldn't be alive. I trust him more than anyone.

"Hey, Connie." I stop in front of the door, and before slipping inside the limo, I say, "Mr. Demetriou is joining us this evening."

"And every evening after tonight," Apollo adds, smirking.

I hate that my dad sent Uncle Alexander to manage the warehouse so that he could insert his new stepson into my life. Apollo seems nice and friendly, but he's up to something. Those mischievous grins he aims at me immediately make me distrust him.

Constantine's gaze flicks to Apollo. A hint of jealousy touches his eyes and then quickly fades. "Are you still going to Olympus? Or have those plans changed as well?"

I can hear the irritation in his tone and feel like I owe him an apology, even though I don't. We're friends, but it's more complicated than that.

"Same plans," I tell Constantine as I get into the limo.

I'm a creature of habit. I like knowing my schedule every day and religiously sticking to it. But I suppose I should have mentioned adding Apollo to the mix beforehand.

Apollo's hand brushes my ass as he gets in behind me.

"Get your hands off Miss Drakos," Constantine warns.

Apollo laughs it off and slides across the bench next to me. "Calm down. It was an accident."

"Uh-huh," Constantine groans. "Touch her again, and I'll break your fingers."

He slams the door in Apollo's face.

"He's friendly." Apollo laughs. "I think he's got a little crush on you." He rolls his broad shoulders against the leather bench, turning his head to smile at me. "Can't say I blame him."

He's so charming it sickens me. I have to keep reminding myself he's not trying to know me. He wants to butter me up and make me putty in his hands.

What game are you playing?

My dad always says the best way to discover someone's true intentions is to bring them into the fold. To let them *think* they are part of the family. Maybe that's what I need to do

with Apollo. Let him believe that I don't suspect him of devious intent. Make him think he's my family.

That's a little hard to do when he stares at my body like he's trying to etch every detail into his memory. My skin tingles when his eyes roam over me. And I hate that I like it.

"Stop looking at me like that," I say with fire behind my words.

He puts his arm on the bench behind me, his musky cologne invading my senses. "Like what?"

Like you want me.

"You and Ares need to learn the meaning of personal space. I don't like men I barely know trying to handle me or tell me what to do."

"I haven't touched you," he says, which is technically accurate. "Or told you what to do."

"In so many ways, yes, you have. You just demanded you drive me. As you know, I don't take orders from my father and won't take them from you."

His lips curl up into a delicious grin. "You're a little vixen."

The limousine rolls down the long, paved driveway and off the property. Apollo moves to his side of the car and folds his hands on his lap. I can feel him watching me as I grab a bottle of champagne from the ice beside me. Constantine knows all of my nightly rituals. He also knows who I become at The O Club.

I need liquid courage for what I do at Olympus. When I become Mistress O, I wear clothes that would make my father gasp. So I spare him the displeasure of seeing his daughter dressed like a lady of the night.

Like a Madam.

Olympus is the only place where I feel confident. My weight doesn't matter in my mistress clothes, and no one treats me like Ophelia Drakos.

I can't lose this club.

It's my home.

Apollo has no idea what he's gotten himself into tonight. I can't wait to see the look on his handsome face when I transform into Mistress O.

I'm glad it's not Ares beside me. He would have me bent over every surface in the club. And since I'm still pissed at my father, I would probably let Ares act out his dirty, stepsister fantasy.

"You fucked your driver," Apollo says as we enter the club district in Beacon Bay. It's not a question but a fact. "I see the way he looks at you. Shouldn't the rules about touching you extend to him, too?"

He's annoyed.

Interesting.

I don't respond, and he continues, "I bet your dad would have a coronary if he knew the man he pays to protect his little girl is fucking her behind his back."

I check to see if the divider is up. Thankfully, I can't see Constantine through the tinted glass, and he can't hear us back here with the music on.

"So what if I fucked him?" I get in Apollo's face, flipping back to bitch mode to protect my bodyguard. "Are you jealous it wasn't you?"

I immediately regret my last statement. Thankfully, the limo stops at Olympus, so we don't have to finish this conversation.

Chapter Twenty-Three

APOLLO

THE MOUTH ON OPHELIA DRAKOS GETS MY DICK HARD. SHE'S so used to being a boss that she doesn't think twice about telling me to fuck off. I can see why Ares is obsessed with her. But we have one goal—take down Belen Drakos.

Fucking around with Ophelia is a bad idea and only complicates matters. Besides, she can be a real asset to us. We've only lived with the Drakos for two weeks, and already they have exposed the cracks in their foundation. If Belen doesn't sign over a quarter of Olympus at the end of the month, his daughter might kill him.

I don't put it past her.

Ophelia glares at me as we arrive at Olympus. Her words still linger in my mind, gnawing at me like an annoying pest.

So what if I fucked him? Are you jealous it wasn't you?

She knows how to push all of our buttons. Of course, I'm jealous of any man who gets the pleasure of making her come.

Not like I will touch her.

But I can watch her with my brothers. They have no problem with my demands and will fuck her however I want.

Anything to make me happy.

Constantine opens the door, tipping his head to the side, gesturing for me to get out. I tap my elbow into his meaty arm as I exit the limo and give him a stern glare.

He gives me a look that says, "I'm watching you."

I don't understand why Ophelia is so insecure about her body when she has men ready to kill each other for her. Literally. Ares would gladly fight Constantine to the death for one night with our stepsister.

Out front, a line wraps halfway around the block. The club is two stories high, with rooftop access. In the basement, there's a members-only sex club with a five-year wait list to join. That's why Belen conceded to Ophelia. Whatever she's done to the place has driven up the interest. The girls must be top-notch for wealthy men to pay one million annually.

Constantine rushes ahead of us to open the back door to the club for Ophelia. "After you, Mistress O."

Mistress O?

Ophelia places her hand on his cheek and smiles, but her eyes are on me. She's such a brat I want to take her over my knee and spank her. Constantine follows after her, letting the door go so I have to slip inside before it hits me.

Dickhead.

It's bad enough I got Ares at home laying claim to her. Even Atlas has taken an interest in our stepsister. And now I have to deal with her fucking bodyguard? This girl is going to be more of a problem than I thought.

We stroll down the corridor accented with black walls and gold mirrors. I glimpse Ophelia in the glass, staring at her ass and those thick thighs that look good in black leather pants.

Her heels click on the black-and-gold tiled floor to the last door on the right. Ophelia pushes it open and stops to look at her bodyguard. "Connie, can you pop by the office and get an update from Sam? I need to know how much we've taken in tonight?" Constantine nods, and she says, "And can you see if the new girl's here yet? I want to give her a few pointers before she starts."

He smiles as she touches his face again. Then he looks at me. "You better watch out for her while I'm gone. No funny business, Mr. Demetriou."

“Don’t worry, *Connie*.” I get in his face to challenge him despite his size. Even Ares would have trouble taking him down. “She’s got all the man she needs right here.”

“Apollo,” she groans. “No need to start trouble.” She gives Constantine a sweet smile. “He’ll behave. You know I can handle him.”

“Of course, you can,” he says, walking in the opposite direction.

“Are you sure you’re not fucking him?” I ask as we descend a narrow staircase into the depths of the club. “He’s possessive.”

Ophelia holds onto the thin railing as we enter the basement. “And if I were, I don’t see how that’s any of your business.”

“You’re going to be my stepsister. I don’t like the way he looks at you.”

When we hit the bottom of the staircase, Ophelia turns around to face me and points at a door to our right. “Once we enter the club, I’m not Ophelia anymore. I’m Mistress O.”

It’s so dark inside the club I have to blink to adjust my eyes. Loud, sensual music blares over the sound of men grunting and women moaning. There’s slapping and sucking. I can only make out shapes as we pass a few open rooms. A soft, red glow illuminates the bodies of several men and women, but I can’t make out their faces.

Ophelia opens another door to our right and leads me inside. It’s not as dark as the club, but the room is barely lit. Candles burning on the oak desk cast a glow over the space. A small sitting area with a couch and table is on the right. Ophelia doesn’t say a word and slips behind the changing screen to the left.

She removes her shirt and tosses it onto the top of the screen. “There’s a carnival mask on the table if you want to wear one. Most of our clients do.”

I walk over to the table and grab a black mask from a pile. “How about you? Do you prefer to remain anonymous?”

“Sure.” She steps out from the screen, wearing the same tight, black leather pants but has swapped out her blouse for a black-and-gold corset. “I wear a special mask.”

The blood rushes to the tip of my cock with her tits hanging out of the corset. Her dark hair is now hanging over her shoulder in long tendrils. Those plump lips are several shades darker than before, shining with red lipstick. I want to see how that color looks on my dick.

I’m staring so hard I don’t hear her the first time. So Ophelia waves to gain my attention and points her finger. “Can you hand me the mask with the gold feather?”

My heart beats faster when she covers her eyes with the mask and fastens it at the back of her head.

This isn’t Ophelia.

She’s Mistress O.

Constantine enters the room with a short, blonde girl with long hair that brushes her perky tits. They’re tiny compared to Ophelia’s, but she’s cute and young. Men would pay good money to fuck her.

“I have to train the new girl,” Ophelia tells me. “You can watch if you like or go upstairs with Constantine and get started in your new office.”

Train her?

Like hell, I’m leaving. I love to watch. I want a front-row seat to Ophelia giving sex tips.

“I’ll stay.” I flash a charming smile that usually disarms her, and it works, her guard lowering instantly. “Maybe you can give me a few pointers.”

Not like I let women touch me. The thought of having tiny hands with long fingernails trailing down my body makes me sick. Without fail, *that night* flashes into my mind every time. The night that still gives me nightmares.

Four years of torture.

I can't stand the feel of a woman's hand around my dick. Only my own. It's like that night has never left me. I want to throw up whenever I try to be with a woman.

Sometimes I do.

Ophelia tosses her hair back and laughs. "Oh, you're not getting any action in this club, lover boy." Then she turns her back to me and introduces herself to the new girl. "Come with me, Annabelle."

She has no idea how much I *don't* want any action. The O Club could very well become my new favorite place. Plenty of men like to watch other people fuck.

My secret is safe here.

Chapter Twenty-Four

ARES

YOU KNOW THE SAYING, MISERY LOVES COMPANY? THAT'S why Atlas sits in the passenger seat, trying to talk me off the ledge so I don't crash my Camaro. I love this car. And I love him. But I'm so fucking angry about having to throw my fight that I want to drive off a cliff.

Gripping the stick shift, I floor the gas pedal and race toward the light, taking a hard right.

"Ares," Atlas warns, curling his fingers around my wrist. "Calm down. If you crash this car, you'll kill both of us, and we won't get our revenge."

Through clenched teeth, I say, "I'm going to rip out Alexander Drakos's dead fucking heart from his chest." I whip around another bend, the wheels screeching, the scent of rubber wafting in the breeze. "And then I'm going to feed it to that smug bastard."

My brother's hold on my wrist tightens. "Knock this shit off and slow the fuck down."

If anyone can talk some sense into me, it's Atlas. He gets me in ways Apollo never has and never will. It probably has something to do with all the girls we fucked together, all the women we passed around so our brother can cure his affliction. Our need to help Apollo bonded us.

So I release my foot from the gas, snapping my head at Atlas. His shoulders sink in relief.

“I’m mad,” I tell him. “But I would never do anything to hurt you.”

Family is everything.

We’re all we have.

I pull up in front of a rundown building on the South Side of Beacon Bay. The home of Akropolis. At least a hundred cars crowd the parking lot and line down the street against the curb. People drink and smoke at the entrance, sharing rolled blunts and cigarettes.

I hop out of my Camaro and walk with Atlas toward the building. At the door, I tip my head at a bouncer.

“Hey, Frankie.”

He nods. “Hey, boss. Good luck tonight.”

I wink. “I don’t need luck.”

I head into the fight club, knowing I will lose tonight.

I don’t have a choice.

“Alexander showed up at the house tonight as a reminder,” Atlas says. “You have to lose.”

It’s killing me.

“I know, *little brother*.”

I pride myself on being undefeated. My entire career is unblemished, and I’m tainting my winning streak to keep my club. It’s a catch twenty-two situation. I can either win the fight or lose my club.

It’s that simple.

Most women in the building are barely dressed, their bare flesh on display. As usual, there are at least twice the amount of men. Women stare at me as I pass. They look at Atlas, too.

Akropolis is what you’d expect for a fight club—two rings, four bars, three concession stands, and complete fucking chaos. People are waving money in the air, taking bets. Almost naked girls are dressed in spandex and underwear. One girl is

shaking her pasty-covered tits with only a tiny piece of fabric covering her pussy.

Two fights are already in progress. They're boxers. Sometimes, we invite mixed martial artists to Akropolis.

Like tonight.

The guy I'm fighting flew in from Las Vegas and is part of an MMA team. He's a legit, no-nonsense fighter. Even if I wasn't supposed to throw the fight, there's a good chance I could lose for real.

We weave through the crowd toward the back of the building. I have an hour to get my hands wrapped and complete my pre-fight ritual. Usually, I would come two hours early and listen to music. But this isn't a regular fight, and I don't give a shit.

Atlas and I push past the crowd of sweat-covered people. The stench of bleach, blood, alcohol, and cigarette smoke floats through the air.

I enter the back hallway, slinging a bag over my shoulder. "Do you think Alexander told Ophelia about the fight after we left?"

He shakes his head. "Nah. He's hiding that from her. Did you see how cagey he got when she asked if he was getting into sports betting?"

"Yeah, I guess. But if he fucks up our plans..."

"He won't," Atlas says with confidence. "He doesn't want his niece to hate him. And Ophelia will if she finds out what he's doing to you. You've already got her wrapped around your finger."

I glance at him. "I do, don't I? Pretty soon, she'll be ours."

He grins at that.

Fighters stroll down the dimly lit hallway, wearing boxing trunks. I wave to two men I recognize. Atlas bobs his head, and we keep going without a word to them.

Everyone at Akropolis knows better than to speak to me on a fight night. I demand complete silence to focus on my technique and allow myself to get into the zone.

I push on the door to the changing room and step inside. “If Ophelia finds out about the fight, maybe I’ll get a pity fuck.”

He punches my arm lightly. “You’re a cheat.”

“You want her?” I open the locker and look for my gloves. “She’s yours, too. No one is stopping you.”

I chuck the tape and gauze at Atlas and sit in front of him in a chair, leaning forward for him to wrap my hands. He’s been doing this for me since high school. Atlas is my good luck charm. I’m superstitious as fuck, and this is one of many rituals.

“Wrap my hands, and let’s get this over with.”

My words say one thing, but I feel like I’m dying on the inside. I’m losing a piece of myself by throwing this fight because of the Drakos family.

My new family.

Fuck them.

Chapter Twenty-Five

OPHELIA

I NEVER MEANT TO SHOW APOLLO MY SPECIAL PLACE. THE plan was to leave him in the office upstairs, get acquainted with the finances, and then disappear into The O Club. But I wanted to see how he would react.

He's excited.

Intrigued.

His head pops into each room to get a better look. Apollo is like a little boy in a toy store, except this one is more fun. I wonder if he'll ask to fuck one of the girls and if he'll want the family discount to become a member.

He likes it here.

What man wouldn't?

We stroll down the dark hallway with Annabelle between us. She's a tiny thing with a heart-shaped face, a Southern drawl, and small, pink nipples.

Our members will like her.

My dad made the right decision by offering me a quarter share of the club. Without me, this place would fall apart. The last moron who managed The O Club was picking hookers up on corners and giving them jobs.

That shit doesn't fly with me.

My girls are the prettiest and sexiest women I could find. They come from all over the country. Some we even recruited

overseas from webcam sites. The women of The O Club are like caviar.

And worth the money.

We enter a room to our left, where one of my favorite clients waits for us. Travis is a hedge fund manager from Manhattan and enjoys helping me train the girls. He flew in to meet Annabelle.

He licks his lips as we approach him. “Mistress O. As always, you chose well.” His head lowers to take in every inch of Annabelle’s body. “My, my, you’re a beauty. What is your name, darling?”

“Annabelle,” she whispers, her accent thick as the name rolls off her tongue.

New girls are almost always shy. But the men find it more of a turn-on because they think that means they can teach them something.

Not my girls, though.

She may look shy and adorable, but Annabelle is about to blow Travis’s mind. I found her at some hole-in-the-wall strip club in Louisiana after someone forwarded me a video they had taken.

The person who sent the video was a member of The O Club and said she gave the best head he’d ever had in the Champagne Room. That was high praise, considering the quality of my girls. So, I tracked Annabelle down and offered her a job.

“Mistress O.” Travis extends his hand to me. “You are a vision this evening.”

I place my hand in his, which he kisses. He’s obsessed with Mistress O and has even offered to pay me his yearly membership fee for one night.

One million dollars.

Of course, I said no.

Travis is wearing a black carnival mask with red accents and nothing else, his average size dick on display. His dark blond hair is short on the top and styled with gel. He's in good shape and in his late forties. But, like most of our members, I only saw his face the day we met. He signed the nondisclosures and legal documents after passing a thorough background check, and I took his money.

No questions asked.

I don't care why the men are here or if they're married and have children. We never really know a person, anyway. Even spouses keep secrets and hide their deepest and darkest desires. It's an illusion we create to be happy.

This little slice of paradise is their haven. It's also mine. So, I never judge anyone. I have learned to let go of preconceived notions about our members.

It's more than a sex club.

The O Club is an experience.

A lifestyle if you can afford it.

I stand by the bed with Apollo at my side as Annabelle gets on it with Travis. Most of our clients have wives and girlfriends. They come here to escape from it all and relive a piece of the single life.

I don't judge.

Nor do I care.

We have a handful of wealthy women who frequent the club. They often come for some girl-on-girl action before our male members team up on them. The women members are freaky and a big hit with the men. I suspect some of them know each other. They prefer to explore their sexuality while hiding behind a mask in the dark.

Annabella sucks Travis into her mouth, and I kneel on the bed beside them when she's too aggressive. This is all part of my job. Travis is used to me guiding the girls onto his cock and pays extra for it.

Apollo shifts behind me as I wrap Annabelle's hair around my fist, moving her head to show her another technique. I wonder what Apollo is doing. Is he touching his hard cock? Does this excite him as much as me? I like knowing that he's watching me.

"Mistress," Travis groans. "That's perfect."

It's like I've fucked Travis a hundred times. But this is the closest we ever get. I know his hard-on is for me, and I like it. Not because I'm interested in him.

I enjoy knowing a man finds me desirable. Until Ares and Atlas said I was sexy, I only ever felt that way at The O Club.

Once Annabelle finds the perfect rhythm, I let go of her hair. She sucks Travis the way I showed her. The irony is not lost on me. I'm giving our girls sex tips when I haven't had sex since I fucked Constantine.

Six months ago.

I watch Annabelle's spectacular performance worthy of an Oscar. Apollo breathes harder. He hasn't spoken a word, but I know he's into this.

I turn my head to look at him.

His gaze meets mine.

He licks his lips.

I bite mine.

Travis groans loudly, and I snap my attention back to him. After he finishes in Annabelle's mouth, he looks at me.

"Can I keep her for the night, Mistress?" Travis brushes his thumb over her cheek, his semi-hard cock popping out of her mouth. "I like this one."

"I knew you would."

I turn to leave, and he says, "Stay." Then he pats the bed. "Join us."

"You know the rules, Trav." I shake my head. "Mistress O is off-limits. But sure, you can keep Annabelle for the night."

I sound ridiculous talking about myself in the third person. But Mistress O is not real. She's my alter ego I keep tucked in the darkest depths of my mind.

“What about me?” Apollo dips his head down and whispers in my ear, “Can I fuck Mistress O?”

I stiffen at his question.

A thrill rushes over me, but I don't show my excitement. I glance up at Apollo, my heart hammering in my chest. Sweat breaks out on my neck and spreads down my back.

He holds my gaze for a second and then looks away. “I need to get started on the books. If you can point me toward the office, I'll find my way.”

Seriously?

I want to answer his question.

Yes, I would let him.

I want him so badly.

Instead, I guide him out of the room. It's better this way. Nothing good could come from fucking my stepbrother.

WHEN I LOOK AT MY WATCH AGAIN, IT'S ALMOST THREE o'clock. In a few hours, I have to get up to go shopping with Athena. That was part of the deal I struck to get my rightful share of the club.

I strip off the corset inside my office and ditch the mask, quickly returning to Ophelia. I love having an alter ego. It helps me to become more confident—more in control. Unfortunately, though, I still struggle when I'm away from Olympus.

I meet Constantine at the top of the stairs.

He holds open the door with his hip. “Rough night, Mistress?”

I nod. “Training the girls is tedious. I could use a snack if you have something waiting for me in the limo.”

As we exit the club through the back door, he says, “That’s not the only thing waiting for you.”

The limo’s door opens.

Apollo pops his head out.

“I offered to drive him home earlier, but he insisted on waiting for you in the car.”

“It’s okay,” I tell him and throw out my hand, gesturing for Apollo to slide across the leather bench to make room.

He inches backward. His dark, intense eyes are laser-focused on me. “You look like Ophelia again.”

“I usually do by the end of the night.” I climb into the limo beside him, and we drive home seconds later. “How was your first night?”

Apollo inspects my face as if searching for traces of Mistress O. “It was great,” he deadpans. “Best night of my life. I got to hang out with Connie and have quality male bonding time.”

“You could have stayed downstairs with me for a little longer.” I grab my late-night snack from the bar and bottled water. Peeling back the chocolate bar wrapper, I ask, “Are the books in order?”

He swipes a hand across his jaw. “I need more time with them. I got very little done with your boyfriend hovering over my shoulder.”

I take a few bites of the chocolate and wash it down with water. “I’ll talk to him, okay? Constantine isn’t used to sharing me with anyone. And he’s kinda protective.”

“I can see that,” he shoots back. “He threatened to cut off my balls if I touched you.”

“Well, it won’t come to that.” I fold the foil over the half-eaten candy bar and offer it to Apollo. “Want some?”

He pushes out his hand. “No, I better not. Ares has me on a low-sugar diet.”

“Are you diabetic?”

He shakes his head. “My brother is obsessive about health. He’s into herbal supplements and organic everything. If he even sees sugar or carbs, he flips out on us.”

I toss my hair over my shoulder and stroke my fingers through the ends. “He must love what I eat.”

Apollo’s shoulders raise a few inches. “He’d never say anything to you. My brother likes you too much. He’s still in the honeymoon phase and trying to impress you.”

“If he says anything to me about food, I’ll kick his ass.”

He tips his head back and laughs. “I’d love to see that. You’re the only woman who’s ever put him in his place.”

“That’s the only reason he’s pursuing me,” I say, confident that I’m only a conquest. “A guy like Ares would never be into someone like me.”

“You undervalue yourself, Mistress.” He moves closer to me on the bench, and I’m suddenly too aware of how good he smells. “Instead of asking yourself why Ares would be into you, you should ask why you would be into him. I love my brother, but you’re way out of his league. Not the other way around.”

My heart pounds so hard I can hear the thumping in my ears. I find it challenging to look at Apollo. I never once thought of myself as worthy of a guy like him.

Or his brothers.

“Do you think that?” I mutter after my heart calms to an average rate. “That I’m too good for Ares?”

He bobs his head. “You have more to offer Ares than he could ever give you.”

I feel stupid for associating looks with worth. But as a young girl, my friends and classmates emphasized beauty more.

They saw me as the fat girl.

So, I saw myself that way too.

I'm learning more about myself from the Demetriou brothers in a few weeks than in my twenty-three years.

Apollo leans over, a strange expression casting a dark cloud over his gorgeous face. "How do you do that every night? Become someone else."

I'm stunned by his question. No one has ever asked me about my work. I sacrifice relationships to keep this part of my life private—the only part I love. I cut off whatever friends I had left when I became Mistress O, and dating is out of the question.

"I like it," I admit. "It's the only thing I have left now that my mom is gone. When I'm Mistress O, no one looks at my body like I'm disgusting. They're not judging me. I can be myself when I'm there. I don't want to take off the mask and go home some nights. That's why I can't lose Olympus. I'll do anything to get my share."

Apollo startles me by closing the distance between us. "You can be whoever you want. But I prefer Ophelia."

The warmth of his breath rolls across my lips, sparking a wild desire in me. I'm practically panting, waiting for him to make a move.

I don't feel so stupidly insecure with Apollo. He sees me for who I am and likes me. His lips part, and for a moment, I think he will kiss me.

But the limo abruptly stops.

I'm thrown back against the bench. So is Apollo. We stay on our respective sides of the car, breathing harder than before.

His eyes drift to my mouth, and he licks his lips. "To be continued, Mistress."

Then he gets out of the limo, leaving me soaking through my panties and desperate for more.

Chapter Twenty-Six

ARES

MY MUSCLES ACHE FROM FIGHTING THE MIXED MARTIAL ARTIST from Las Vegas. I put up a fight because I'm not a fucking pussy. But he knocked the wind out of me the second I lowered my guard.

When I glanced over and saw Alexander Drakos pointing at his watch, I knew my time was almost up. I was winning up until that point.

But I had to lose.

There was never another option. Not if I wanted to hang onto my fight club. So I let the asshole get a clean shot. It had to look natural. The last thing I saw before my head hit the floor was Alexander's smug face.

Fuck him.

It's my first career loss, and I want to curl up and die. The hits to my face and body are nothing compared to my wounded ego. I may never fully recover from that loss.

After a hot bath, I get into bed naked and turn off the light. It's well past three o'clock, the room dark from the blackout curtains. I close my eyes and lay back on a stack of pillows.

My head is fucking pounding from the hit I took to my temple. The Vicodin still hasn't kicked in, and even the fat blunt I smoked in the bathtub didn't help.

I need a different release.

I fist my cock and give it a few strokes as my bedroom door opens. Snapping my head toward the door, I hear footsteps on the hardwood and catch a whiff of Ophelia's sweet perfume as she enters the room, closing the door behind her.

I don't say anything.

I don't even move.

Still gripping my dick, I wait for Ophelia to do whatever she came in here to do. This girl is so unpredictable. I expect her to go through my shit. See if I'm hiding something. She's always accusing me of having bad intentions. But she surprises me by getting onto the bed.

"Ares?"

Ophelia's hand brushes over the mattress and misses me by a few inches. She sighs. The bed dips, and before she can get away, I hook my arm around her middle and pull her on top of me. I hold back a curse as I hit my bruised ribs, ready to scream. It hurts so fucking bad.

Clutching her hips, I readjust myself so my hard cock is between her thighs. "Looking for me, little dragon?"

She gasps, but it sounds more like a moan.

"Well?" I run my hand up her stomach, feeling her delicious curves. "What can I help you with?"

Ophelia swats my hand away as if I'm diseased, which isn't helping my ego. "Here's the deal, Ares." She straddles me with her thick thighs, pressing her hand to my chest. "I'm not going to fuck you. But I need to come after the night I've had."

"You want to come. So do I." I thrust my hips. "Feel that, baby? You make my dick harder than steel."

I attempt to explore her body again, but she smacks my hand away when I reach her stomach. "Please don't touch me there."

I'm so fucking confused. "Why not?"

She pauses momentarily and then says, “Because I don’t like being touched in certain places.”

“Where can I put my hands?”

I wanted her from the moment we met. So I’ll follow her rules if it leads to me getting a happy ending.

She clutches my wrist and uses my fingers to peel back her panties. “You can touch me here.” My sexy girl moans when I drag my finger up her wet slit. Then she grabs my other hand, shoves down her tank top, and covers her tit. “And here.”

“I like where this is headed.” I roll my thumb over her nipple. “Where else?”

“That’s it.”

I move my hand to her cheek. “How about here?”

“Yeah, okay,” she whispers.

I slid my thumb across her lips. “And here?”

“Yes.”

I sit up so I can get closer to her lips. “Can I kiss you?” I can’t see her face in the dark, but her hair whacks me when she shakes her head. “Why so many rules, little dragon?”

“Because I don’t want you to hurt me.”

I sink back to the mattress, deflated by her response. “I won’t.”

Why does everyone think the worst of me? They look at my ink and think I’m a thug. Combine that with my reputation on the streets, and I’m lucky if I can get anyone to take me seriously.

If not for Apollo, with his pretty boy exterior and fancy Yale degree, I never would have gotten a lease on my building. Akropolis wouldn’t even exist without his intervention.

“I can’t risk it, Ares.” Her words are pained, like it’s killing her to say them. “You live in the room next to mine. We’re going to be family. What we’re doing is wrong. I shouldn’t even be in here.”

“Says who?” I trail my hand up the right side of her body and pinch her nipple. “I’m not related to you. Our parents fucking don’t change a damn thing.”

Her fingers skim over the hard planes of my abdomen, and when she hits a tender spot, I hiss. “Oh, Ares. Did I hurt you? Are you okay?”

“Yeah, babe,” I grunt when she accidentally hits the same spot again. “Just peachy.”

She slides off me, but her face is dangerously close to mine. I want to kiss her. But she has so many damn rules.

“What happened to you? Are you hurt?”

“Turn on the light, and I’ll show you.”

“But,” she says with a hint of hesitation. “I’m only wearing a bra and panties.”

“So? I don’t see the problem. If you can’t tell, I’m naked.” I roll onto my side to face her. “I’m not shy. Turn on the light.”

“I like us better in the dark. This is the only time I feel comfortable letting you touch me.”

What the fuck?

I know I’m a dick, but I haven’t been that much of an asshole. She likes us better in the dark? Her words sting.

“I don’t understand, babe.” I cup her cheek, stroking her jaw with my thumb. “What’s going on in that pretty head of yours? You’re acting a little crazy. Normally, I love your brand of crazy because it suits mine. But something is up with you.”

“I don’t want you to see me naked,” she admits as a shudder rips through her.

I recall what Apollo said about her feeling self-conscious about her weight. He would know what to say. So would Atlas, but in his own way. He’d probably draw his thoughts on paper for her. My brothers are better at understanding people than me.

“We can keep the lights out,” I tell her, and she releases a relieved breath. “But can I touch you?”

“Ares,” she whines. “I like what we have. This feels safe for right now.”

“Please.”

I'm not above begging.

After having the shittiest night of my life, I want to feel her skin against mine. I was so down on myself before she got into bed with me. She's warm and soft, and she smells like a dessert. I want to taste every inch of her body, mark her so my brothers know our stepsister is mine.

“You can guide my hands,” I say when she doesn't answer.

She shifts beside me. “Okay.”

I slip my fingers between hers. “Lead the way, little dragon.”

Chapter Twenty-Seven

OPHELIA

ARES IS PATIENTLY WAITING FOR ME TO GUIDE HIS HAND. HE'S the type of man who takes what he wants, and I was counting on that. But this feels more personal.

Intimate, even.

I place his hand on my breast.

His fingers brush over my painfully sore nipple, teasing me. "Can I take this off?" Ares tugs on my bra. "Is this allowed?"

"Yes."

He's eager to discard the fabric from my body and throws it across the room.

"I'm surprised you're following my rules. It's almost like you're a gentleman."

Ares closes his mouth over my nipple and sucks, ripping a moan from my mouth. "Would a gentleman do this?" He tugs on my nipple with his teeth and flicks his tongue over the aching bud. "I can make you come like this."

"Yeah?" I palm the back of his head as he licks my breast. "Make me come, Ares."

"But I'd rather you ride my hand and come all over my fingers."

I smile at his suggestion. "I like the sound of that."

He climbs on top of me and pushes my legs together, stripping off my panties in one swift motion. “Better yet, I want you to come on my face.”

The thought of his face between my thighs terrifies me. He licked my pussy for a second on his first night in the house. But he wasn’t down there long enough for me to get into my head and start worrying about what he would think.

“Ares, I thought we talked about this.”

Gripping my hips, he leans forward, his huge cock poking my inner thigh. “What? You don’t like getting your pussy licked?”

I can’t think straight.

Or breathe.

“What happened to me guiding your hands?”

“I don’t need hands to eat you out.” He drops his hands from my hips and holds himself up on his elbows between my thighs. “I don’t get this game you’re playing, baby. Do you wanna come or not?”

“Yes.”

His breath fans across my sex. “Then you’re going to have to let me touch you. I’m not fucking Houdini. Although, I could probably come up with a few ways to get you off without using any part of my body.”

I run my fingers through his hair. “It’s just... What if you can’t breathe down there?”

He laughs—actually fucking laughs—and I want to punch him. “You’re not going to smother me, little dragon. Wrap your legs around my head, so I can choke on the taste of your pussy.”

I sigh. “You’re crazy.”

“Crazy for *you*.” He bends forward and rolls his tongue along my slit. “I’m serious. Squeeze your legs around me.”

“No,” I groan.

“Fine.” He grips the backs of my thighs. “Put your legs over my shoulders.”

I do as he says, and Ares gives me slow, tentative licks that pebble my skin with tiny bumps of arousal. “Oh, my God.”

“I prefer Ares,” he says with a chuckle. “But I guess God will do.” His hand slips between my legs, pushing two fingers inside me. “You’re so wet for me.” He moves his fingers faster so I can hear exactly what he’s doing to me. “Squeeze my fingers.” I follow his instruction, tightening my grip on him, and he rewards me with, “Good girl.”

Keeping his fingers inside me, Ares licks my pussy, tasting me like I’m his meal. I’ve never felt comfortable letting a man do this to me. You would think with my club experience, I have done it all. But this is one thing I have always been scared to do.

My eyes slam shut each time his tongue darts between my folds.

“Feels good, doesn’t it?” Ares spreads apart my pussy lips with his thumbs and goes to town, licking me. “Say my name, baby.”

“Ares,” I whimper.

“Say it again,” he demands. “I want my brothers to know who’s making you scream.”

“Ares,” I moan several times until his name dies on my tongue.

His fingers pump into me, and as my orgasm builds, a wave of cold and heat washes over me. Taking his hair between my fingers, I pull on the ends as the last of my tremors hit me like a hurricane. And when I come down from my high, my entire body feels numb.

“You taste so sweet.” The bed dips as he gets up, and I hear him lick his fingers. “I can’t get enough of you, little dragon.” He climbs up my body and kisses my breast, nibbling on the hard bud. “I want to be inside you.”

He thrusts his hips with his palms on each side of my head. Just enough for me to feel the head of his dick.

“No sex,” I tell him. “Remember? That was part of the deal.”

He bends down so our faces are inches apart, breathing against my lips. “How about the tip?”

“Can you come like that?”

Ares chokes on a laugh. “I can come just thinking about you.” Fisting his cock in his hand, he rubs the tip between my wet folds. “I want to feel your tight pussy. Can I put it in? Just an inch.”

I’ve been with plenty of men, though none as good-looking as Ares. We’ve already crossed one of the biggest barriers. I let him put his head between my legs and kiss me down there.

“An inch for you is not very much,” I point out. “I work at a sex club and haven’t seen a dick as big as yours. You’ve got to be as long as my forearm.”

“How about two inches, then?” Ares licks my bottom lip until I open up for him. “I’ll go slow.”

It’s like we’re playing sex roulette. If I say yes to two inches, he’ll ask for another. And another until he’s inside me.

I want that.

I do.

“Okay. Two inches.”

His tongue slips past my lips and tangles with mine, soft at first, before he becomes more aggressive. “I lost my fight tonight,” he says between kisses. “The first one of my career. That’s why my chest and head hurts.” He licks my neck as he inches his cock inside me. “And my pride. But this makes up for it.”

My heart cracks open at his confession. I’m no expert on fighting, but I’ve watched enough boxing matches with my

father's men. A fighter's first loss is a big deal. Instead of wallowing in his grief, he's sharing this moment with me.

He makes me feel special.

"I'm sorry, Ares." I put my hand on his back, moving it lower until I squeeze his tight ass. Then, with a quick thrust of my hips, he drives in another inch. "I'll go to your next fight if you want."

Ares smiles against my lips, moving slowly but not going any farther. "You can be my lucky charm."

Each slow thrust is met with a kiss, and I get lost in the moment, ignoring the world and our reality. He pulls out right before he's about to come and jerks off on my breasts. I'm a complete mess, slick with his cum, so he hops off the bed and grabs a shirt.

"What a pretty sight," he says with a wicked grin as he dabs the cloth at my breasts. "You're mine now, little dragon."

I snort at his comment. "I'm not a dog, Ares. You don't have to mark your territory."

He smirks. "Yes, I do."

After he's satisfied that I'm clean, he tosses the shirt on the floor and rolls onto his side beside me. We lay in bed, breathing in unison, and when I attempt to search for my clothes, he stops me.

His fingers slip between mine. "Don't go." He tugs me back onto the bed. "Stay with me until morning."

"Okay," I say and curl up on his chest, but it's a lie.

He cradles my head, running his fingers through my hair. "I'm not letting you go."

Yes, you are.

After he falls asleep, I gather my panties and bra from the floor and sneak out of his room. I was an idiot for coming here, for begging him to make me come. We have no future. Because when the sun comes out, this all goes away... and Ares will still be my stepbrother.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

ARES

I ROLL OVER WITH A POUNDING HEADACHE, MY ENTIRE BODY on fire from the beatdown I took last night. Stretching my fingers across the mattress, I search for Ophelia. I want to wrap my arms around her and shove my hard cock between her thighs again.

I want to touch her.

Kiss her.

Tease her.

She's *mine*.

I want to tell her how she drives me crazy, but I can't find her. My hand brushes over the sheet several times before I open my eyes. Of course, she left. I knew she wouldn't stay until morning.

My ego is wounded after losing my first fight. Ophelia helped me forget about the brutal beating I took, but I can only take so many hits before it fucking hurts. And I hate that her words cut me deeper than the fight.

What we did last night wasn't just sex. We didn't fuck. A few inches of my dick don't count. But at that moment, when I told her about the loss, I felt connected to her.

I was vulnerable.

And it scares me.

I slide my legs off the bed and drink the water on my nightstand, downing it with a painkiller. My dick is hard, and I have to pee.

Go figure.

So I head toward the bathroom I share with Apollo, but my brother locks the door.

I bang on it. “Open up, Apollo!”

“Wait your turn,” he shouts over the running water.

This house has fifteen bathrooms, so fuck him. Besides, I need to soak in another Epsom salt bath, and our bathroom only has a shower.

Half-awake, I walk out of my room naked, with a blunt tucked behind my ear, and enter Ophelia’s bathroom through the entrance from the hallway. The ample space includes a four-person Jacuzzi tub and a glass shower.

I used her tub last night before she crawled into my bed. My hair was still wet when she ran her fingers through it, tugging on the ends as I licked her pussy.

I grab the box of Epsom salt and add it to the water. After the tub fills, I can pee without hassle and no longer hard. I hear an alarm on the other side of the door. Any minute, my sexy girl will come crashing into the room. So I flush and hop into the bathtub, hoping to catch her off guard.

She left me, and I’m kind of mad at her. Annoyed that she would ditch me after I told her something that fucking mattered to me.

I needed her to stay.

Ophelia may think she’s not good enough because of the shape of her body. But she’s incredible.

A goddess.

Next to my brothers, I’m not as smart or special. I’m the fighter and the fuck-up. Fighting and fucking are the only things I have ever been good at.

Ophelia looks at me like I'm a god. That's why I told her something meaningful, especially after she was feeling so self-conscious. I want her to know she can be herself with me.

I'm not judging her. Enough people do that already. And I want to tell her that people judge me, too, but for different reasons.

So I get it.

I get *her*.

Ophelia groans behind the closed door, bumping into something hard. "Motherfucking fucking bitch."

I light the blunt and laugh, blowing out a cloud of smoke. The water is warm and feels good on my muscles. They say time heals all wounds, but I don't know if that's true anymore.

I lost my first fight.

I've been repeating this to myself since I took the final blow. After I woke up on the cold floor, I felt broken. Like I left a part of myself in the ring. But just hearing her voice calms my nerves.

She stumbles into the bathroom a few seconds later, arms raised and yawning. She pads toward me, dressed in black spandex shorts and a thin tank top.

Standing in front of the sink, she scrubs a hand at her tired eyes. She must catch a hint of the smoke from my blunt because she sniffs. And then her eyes meet mine in the mirror.

I puff on the blunt, a plume gathering around my head. "Morning, beautiful."

Her eyes widen at me. "What are you doing in here?"

I rest my arm on the ledge, and the ash falls into the water. "What does it look like, little dragon?"

Ophelia turns around and approaches the tub, nostrils flared. "Why are you smoking weed in my goddamn house?"

"Because I need to relax." I offer her the blunt. "Take a hit. You look like you can use it more than me."

She snatches it from my hand and runs it under the sink before chucking it into the trash. “Get out, Ares!” Her naturally tanned cheeks redden. “I have to pee.”

I point at the toilet that has a door. “Go ahead. I don’t mind. I’m well acquainted with your pussy.”

Furious, she spins on her heels and slams the door. “I hate him,” she mutters to herself. “Fucking asshole.”

The exhaust fan turns on. I can’t hear her cursing anymore. She can pretend to hate me all she wants, but her body wouldn’t respond to me the way it does if she didn’t want me.

Ophelia emerges a minute later, her cheeks still flushed, and washes her hands. “Why are you in my bathroom?”

“Because I don’t have a tub and need to soak after a fight.”

She stares at my face as if looking at me for the first time. Then she drops to her knees beside the bathtub and brushes the skin beneath the cut on my forehead. “Ares, what the fuck? Why didn’t you tell me about this last night?”

“It’s not a big deal, babe.” I grip her hip and pull her to me so she’s leaning over the tub, her tits falling out of the top. “You should see the other guy.”

That’s bullshit.

Sure, I fucked up my opponent, but he got the kill shot. Atlas said I was unconscious for a full minute, which I won’t tell her. She’ll only worry about me.

“Ares, this isn’t funny.” Her eyes scan my face, which is slightly bruised and won’t look good in my mother’s wedding pictures. “You should have said something. I would have let you get some sleep.”

“In case you didn’t notice, I wasn’t in the mood for sleeping.”

I shove down her shirt and lick my lips. “You have the best tits I’ve ever seen.”

She lets me massage her for a second before sitting back and yanking up her top. “Ares, I’m trying to talk to you. Stop

thinking with your dick.”

“That’s impossible when you’re around.” I run my hand up and down her sides, and she winces. “What’s wrong, little dragon?”

“You’re touching me.” She glances down at my hand pressed against her stomach. “There.”

I rub her stomach. “Here?”

She pushes me away. “Stop. I don’t like it.”

I sit up and wrap my arms around Ophelia, dragging her into the tub. A scream rips from her throat as the water splashes her pretty face. The ends of her hair are wet, and she’s so flustered I expect her to punch me.

“Dammit, Ares.” She looks down at her wet clothes, frowns, and covers her stomach with her arms, the fabric clinging to her curves. “I hate you so much right now.”

“No, you don’t.” I hold her against my chest, hating myself for making her uncomfortable.

Now that I understand she’s just as insecure as me, I want to make her feel better. Lord knows I need some ego-stroking.

“How do I help you see that you’re beautiful?” I slide my hand beneath her chin, forcing her to look at me. “Hmmm? Tell me, Ophelia. What do I have to say or do for you to see that you’re sexy-as-fuck?”

“What’s with you and your brothers telling me I’m sexy all the time?”

My eyebrows raise at her confession. “My brothers have been hitting on you?”

She shakes her head. “No, not like you do. Your brothers are more subtle.”

“When I see something I want, I don’t fuck around.” I lean forward and let my lips brush hers. “You’re mine, Ophelia.”

“You can’t claim me. I’m going to be your stepsister.”

Like I need a reminder.

“What did my brothers say to you?”

“Atlas gave me the picture he drew of me.” Biting her bottom lip, she grips my shoulders and straddles my thighs. “And Apollo almost kissed me last night.”

What?

Not my brother.

Apollo couldn't kiss a woman without throwing up. I've tried over the years to help with his issues. None of the girls—no matter how hot and willing—have ever been enough for him.

“I'm gonna kill them.”

Ophelia laughs. “Are you jealous, Ares?”

“Of course, I'm fucking jealous. I made it clear you're *mine*.”

She has no idea how many times I've shared with my brothers. That there are no boundaries between the three of us. But I'm a greedy asshole and want Ophelia all to myself.

With our lips inches apart, she stares into my eyes. “Stop saying that. We both know this can only happen in the dark.”

“If it makes you feel better, we can turn out the lights. I need you, little dragon.” I slip my hands beneath her wet shirt and inch it up her stomach, but she slaps my hands. “What's the problem?” I thrust my hips, so she can feel my cock between her thighs, the tip rubbing her clit over her shorts. “I want to feel your skin against mine.”

She nibbles on her lip. “I've never let a man see me completely naked before.”

I kiss her neck, my lips trailing to her cleavage. “I want to feel your pussy. I'll keep my eyes closed if you want.”

“Yeah?” Ophelia sounds excited by the promise. “You would do that for me?”

I shut my eyes, leaning my head back on the tub's ledge. “Take off your clothes, baby.”

I keep my promise and listen as she strips off the sopping-wet shirt and throws it onto the tiled floor. Her shorts are next. And then her panties.

Ophelia gets on top of me again, but I can tell she's holding back, afraid she'll hurt me if she presses her weight on me. So I cup her ass in my hands and move her on top of me, even though any pressure on my bruises hurts like fucking hell.

I let out a groan, but she doesn't notice. She's too busy moaning to see me squirming each time she touches my ribs.

"Ares," she whimpers as my cock breaches her folds.

"Can I open my eyes?" I tap my fingers on her hips. "I won't look down. I want to see your beautiful face."

"Okay," she whispers.

My eyes snap open, and she's breathing harder, chest rising and falling. Her big tits are in my face, and I open my mouth to suck on her nipple. Teasing and tasting her, I give each one love until she grinds against my dick and moans.

Ophelia tilts her head to the side, lips parted. "You think I'm beautiful?"

It's the sexiest fucking thing I've ever seen. Of course, there's vulnerability on her face and in her tone, but she looks every bit the powerful, sexy woman who's become my obsession.

"You're gorgeous." I kiss her lips, threading my fingers through her hair as I deepen the kiss. "And sexy. You look hot holding a gun. I like watching you dominate men. No one gets my dick harder than you."

Licking her lips, she reaches between us and puts me inside her. "You better not be saying that to get what you want."

"I wouldn't dream of it."

With Ophelia on top, she slides down my shaft a few inches, eyes closing as she whimpers, "Oh, God, Ares." Another inch and her eyes open to look at me. "It's been a

while since I had sex. I don't know if I can handle all of you. You're so big."

Most women can't take all of me without being in pain, so I'm used to it. Only the real whores can ride my dick the first time like they're at the rodeo.

Gliding my hands up her arms, I let her take control. "Do whatever you want to me, little dragon. Just don't stop fucking me."

She moves her hips in a rhythmic motion that matches mine, her tits jiggling in front of my face, taunting me. So I smash them together and lick her skin, sucking and biting her nipples until she's screaming.

We must be louder than I thought because the bathroom door opens, crashing into the wall. Apollo stands there, dressed in a suit, his breathing labored as he enters the room.

"Ophelia, are you okay?"

It takes him a second to lock eyes with us. To see that I've got Ophelia's pussy suctioned to my cock under the water.

"She's fine," I tell him. "Aren't you, baby?"

Ophelia stills on top of me, paralyzed by the sight of my brother.

I grab her fat ass and squeeze. "Don't stop, little dragon. He can watch or get out."

Her mouth drops in shock.

I tap her ass again. "Don't be shy. Ride my dick. My brother likes to watch."

She has yet to learn how much he likes it or the deal Atlas and I made with Apollo four years ago. He has issues because of something shitty that happened to him. And since we love Apollo, we indulge him—anything to make our brother whole again.

Apollo shuts the door without a word and leans against the wood. Her eyes flick between us as if considering what to do next. If she gets up, I might kill my brother. My dick has been

harder than steel since I met her. And if she doesn't finish me off, I'll lose my mind. I can't keep jerking off on her tits.

I caress her face to bring her attention back to me. "Show my brother how much of a good girl you are for me." Then my eyes dart at Apollo, who's grabbing himself over the front of his black slacks. "Let Apollo see how good you ride my cock."

A flash of excitement washes over her face. I can tell she's turned on by having us look at her like a sex object. She's not used to men wanting her the way we do.

I drive my cock deeper inside her, a reminder to keep going. She moves along with me, her tits bouncing with each thrust. And when her head snaps to Apollo again, he unzips his pants.

Now, we're ready to rock.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

APOLLO

I THOUGHT OPHELIA WAS IN DANGER. SHE WAS SCREAMING SO loudly I could hear her down the hallway. But I should have known it was because of my sneaky-ass brother. Ares disappeared from his bedroom while I was in the shower.

Found him.

He convinced Ophelia to get naked and in the tub with him. She's on top of him, her nipples hard, and those big tits bouncing in his face. Her skin is glowing, cheeks flushed as our eyes meet.

Ares squeezes her ass. "Don't be shy. Ride my dick. My brother likes to watch."

Yeah, I do.

When Ophelia took me to the club last night, I didn't tell her about some of my fantasies. The O Club caters to every kink and desire. Last year, I considered joining to get closer to Ophelia and see how Belen's most profitable club operated.

Now, she's *ours*.

I shut the door without speaking to them. Ophelia's eyes move between us. She looks unsure of what to do next.

I know she won't get out of the water naked. She would probably jump out the window before she let us see her bare skin.

Ares brushes his fingers on her face to regain her attention. "Show my brother how much of a good girl you are for me."

His gaze moves back to me. “Let Apollo see how good you ride my cock.”

I grab my hard dick over my pants, and Ophelia’s eyes brighten with excitement. Even Ares doesn’t know her the way I do. And until he meets Mistress O, it will be our little secret.

I see her arousal increase as she looks at us, turned on by two men wanting to devour her. Ares thrusts his cock inside her, and she moves with him, her tits bouncing in my brother’s face.

I feel the pressure build in my balls, needing a release. So I unzip my pants seconds before Ares glances at me to see if I’m playing the game.

Of course I am.

He knows I’m fucked up. That I gain pleasure from watching him and Atlas fuck women, and I enjoy it even more when they fuck women at the same time.

It’s not about them.

Or the women.

It’s about power.

Control.

What started with porn eventually led to real women. And then one night, I walked in on Atlas fucking two girls and couldn’t force myself to leave. He didn’t care. My twin and I have shared everything. So he invited me to join them.

The girls were into it.

He handed me the blonde with big tits like she was a piece of cake. But I couldn’t bring myself to do more than stare at them. The blonde was disappointed, but Atlas fucked her good, helping her to forget about me. And after I came, I left his bedroom, feeling disgusted.

Like I do now.

Fisting my shaft, I give myself a few strokes and lick my lips. I can’t see much more than Ophelia’s tits and those big,

brown eyes that keep searching for me.

I want to go over there.

But that's out of character.

I usually watch from a corner.

"Ares." Ophelia wets her lips with her tongue and moans. "Oh, God." Her eyes snap shut from being impaled by my brother's big cock. Her head drops to his shoulder, and she turns her head to the side, eyes open. "Apollo, come here."

I don't move toward her but stop touching myself and consider her request. Ares knows I'm going to stay where I am. He knows what happened four years ago and why I can't let her touch me.

His fingers slip through her hair, and as he looks at me, he brings her mouth to his to distract her. They kiss and fuck, moaning and panting as they move together as a team.

"You're such a good girl," Ares says once their lips separate. "Come for me, little dragon." He turns her head to the side and licks her neck. "Come for Apollo."

Heat glides over my skin as I jerk my cock harder, matching each of Ares's thrusts into her pussy. My brother shatters her world, stealing one orgasm after another, tearing screams of pure pleasure from her lips.

I nut in my hand seconds before Ares comes inside Ophelia. She whimpers from the orgasm before collapsing on Ares, struggling to catch her breath.

"Ares," she whispers.

He's equally spent and clutches her against his chest, stroking his fingers down her arm. "You fuck like a rock star, little dragon." He kisses her lips. "Not that I would expect anything less than perfection from you."

He's really into her. I've never seen Ares show this much interest in a woman.

I tuck my cock back into my pants, needing to escape them.

It's like this every time.

The shame.

The anxiety.

I wipe the cum from my hand on a towel and open the door.

"Apollo, where are you going?" Ophelia asks.

I can't talk to her.

I can't look at her.

"It's his thing, baby," Ares tells her. "Just let him go."

My brothers have no problem indulging my obsession. Some nights, we stop by a bar on our way home from Akropolis, and I choose the girls. So far, none of them have complained.

Once, a woman asked, "Is he just going to stand there and watch?"

She wanted me to join.

But I refused.

I leave the bathroom, and Atlas steps into the hallway as I'm about to turn. He grabs my shoulder before we collide. The leather sketchbook our father gave him tumbles to the ground, flipping open to a new drawing of Ophelia.

We look at each other.

He's an empath like me and can sense my emotions. "What's wrong, Apollo?"

"Nothing," I lie and grab the book from the floor, shoving it into his chest before entering my bedroom.

Atlas follows.

"Don't fucking bullshit me. I know you better than you know yourself. I saw you leaving Ophelia's bathroom. I heard her in there with Ares." My twin steps closer, his brows furrowed. "So, I'll ask you again, Apollo. What the fuck happened in there? And you better not lie to me."

I can't tell if he's concerned or jealous. Maybe a little of both, considering he's been drawing Ophelia nonstop. I wonder if he's been jerking off to the pictures of her.

We look like brothers with the same black hair, olive skin, brown eyes, and our father's Roman nose. But you would never know we're twins.

He's a few inches shorter than me, around six feet tall, muscular but lean. I enjoy wearing suits. Atlas prefers jeans, graphic tees, and sneakers. My jaw is sharper, my face is more masculine, and my twin has a baby face. Our mother still pinches his cheeks because he looks so young.

I'm an extrovert, and he's extremely introverted. Atlas would probably never leave the house if we didn't have a bar and fight club to run. We're so different, and yet we understand each other.

"It's okay, Apollo." Atlas puts his hand on my shoulder. "We're cool with it. I'm sure Ophelia will be, too." He shrugs. "If you want me to fuck her, I will."

The way he says it sounds like pity. Like he hasn't wanted to fuck Ophelia since he started sketching her. He only draws people who fascinate him. And until Ophelia, he's never sketched the same person more than once.

"Don't do that." I shove his hand off my shoulder to enter the bathroom. "I hate when you do that." Running my hands under the sink, I scrub away the reminder of what I have done. "Ophelia isn't like the other girls."

Atlas leans against the door, sketchbook tucked under his left arm, a drawing pencil behind his ear. "Because of her dad?"

I shake my head. "No, because Ares likes her."

"So do I," he admits. "And it's obvious you do, too. It won't be any different from before." He pushes off from the door, giving me a thoughtful look. "You don't have to touch her. Let Ares and me satisfy her."

They're good at that. My brothers don't have the same issues as me. We have big dicks that leave women begging for

more. But it's easier to get off by myself while watching them.

"I want to touch her," I say, and it sounds weird coming from me. "Seeing her on top of Ares in the tub..." I look away from Atlas and rake my fingers through my hair. "I want her to fuck me like that."

I haven't been inside a woman in years. Not since I got drunk my sophomore year at Yale and had some crazy sorority girl shackle me to her bed. She did fucked up things to me and wouldn't let me go until the following day. Thankfully, the drug-laced beer she kept feeding me helped me forget some of it.

After that night, I wasn't the same. I didn't want women to put their hands on me. I have only watched people having sex since then. And when I say people, I mean my brothers.

No one else understands.

"This is a big deal," Atlas comments. "You haven't wanted to fuck a girl since *that* night."

"Yeah." I breeze past him to sit at the desk and flip open the laptop. "Can we please not talk about it?"

When the computer is fully booted, I type my password and open the most recent spreadsheet when the computer boots up. It's my job to maintain the books at every club, an easy task for someone with my schooling and background.

This is all part of our plan to take down Belen Drakos. Unfortunately, Ophelia is in the middle of our feud with her father. We're taking him down along with her dirtbag uncle.

Atlas sits on the windowsill beside my desk, tapping his tattooed fingers on the leather book he rests on his lap. "You should fuck her," he suggests. "Maybe it will help you get over—"

I hold out my hand. "Don't finish that thought."

"It's been four years, Apollo."

"I'm sure a woman forced into a similar situation as me wouldn't put a timeline on when she wanted to have sex again." Keeping my eyes on the screen, I scan the numbers in

the columns, finding comfort in my work. “Now, if you don’t mind, Atlas, I have to finish this report within the hour.”

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean it like that.” Atlas gets up from the windowsill and sighs. “I know what you went through was really fucked up.” He attempts to touch my arm, and I recoil. “I’m not trying to downplay what happened. I hope Ophelia is the one who helps you heal.”

“Yeah,” I agree. “She could be the one. Too bad she’s going to hate all of us for what we’re doing to her family.”

Herein lies our predicament.

Revenge or her?

Chapter Thirty

OPHELIA

APOLLO LEAVES THE BATHROOM THE SECOND HE COMES. I'M exhausted from having multiple orgasms, and my brain is turning to mush, but I know something is wrong.

I'm still thinking about Ares saying, "Don't be shy, baby. Ride my dick. My brother likes to watch."

Apollo likes to watch.

And Ares lets him.

What the fuck?

I enjoyed seeing Apollo jerking his big dick while I fucked his brother. It was the hottest sex I've had but also strange. Apollo stared at me with a vacant look as if he had gone elsewhere.

I hop off Ares and sit in the bathtub beside him. "What just happened?"

His hand dips into the water and between my thighs, as he leans forward to kiss me. "Hmm... Let's see. I made you come more times than you can count. And now, you're wondering why you didn't let me put my dick in all the way last night."

"No, I mean with Apollo. Why did he want to stay and then run away? Did I do something wrong?"

He shakes his head. "Nah, baby. It's not you. He was into it. My brother has a little problem."

"What kind of problem?"

“That’s not my secret to tell.” He glances at the wall and sighs. “Maybe Apollo will tell you someday. But don’t push him. He’s sensitive about it.”

“Oh,” I whisper, deflated. “Okay, sure. I won’t mention it.”

Ares snaps his head at me. “Sorry, babe. I’m not trying to hide shit from you.”

“No, I get it.” I press a kiss to his lips. “Apollo will tell me if he thinks I need to know.”

I have to respect his boundaries. I would hate it if Ares kept pushing me to get naked in front of him. He kept his promise and never looked down. It was so freeing to have sex without any barriers between us.

“We need to get you dressed and fed. My mother hates it when we keep her from her appointments.”

I have to go shopping again with Athena. As her maid of honor, I will pick up our dresses, do a final taste testing of the food, and whatever else she has planned for us.

The wedding is almost here.

Ares grips my hips. “Ready to get out of this tub?”

I rub his hand and smile. “Get me a towel.”

He can see all of me if he looks down at the water. But his eyes are on my face.

Ares doesn’t protest. Instead, he bobs his head and gets out of the tub, spilling water over the sides. “The lady of the house gets whatever she wants.”

He doesn’t bother trying to drip dry on the rug. Nope, he pads across the room, tracking water everywhere, and grabs two towels from the rack.

His back has as much muscle as his arms and chest. This man is a tattooed work of art. Water slides off his muscles and onto the tile. He runs a hand through his black hair, short on the sides and longer on the top.

His dick looks even bigger when it taps his thigh with each step, and I wonder how I fit him inside me. My inner walls

ache from how deep he went, driving harder with each thrust. He let me control the pace, which made the initial stretch of my pussy bearable. But now that I've come down from all the orgasms, I feel him everywhere.

"If you keep staring at me like that," Ares says, whipping me out of my dirty thoughts, "I'm gonna fuck you again."

"I can look, can't I?"

He winks. "See something you like, little dragon?"

Kneeling in the tub, I lick my lips and grab his dick. It's perfect, a big toy I want to play with.

"We're not having sex again," I say as I stroke his length. "I just want to touch you for a second."

He grunts. "Babe, I don't need to tell you how the male body works. Keep rubbing my dick like that, and I *will* do something about it."

I peek up at him and drop my hand. "We'll finish this later."

"Yes, we will." Ares smirks, holding out the towel for me. "Don't be shy, beautiful." He turns his head. "I'm not looking at you. Stay in that tub a second longer and your skin will prune."

I take the towel from him and wrap the soft fabric around me. Like a gentleman, Ares helps me step out of the tub. He pins my back to his chest and curls his arm around me.

"I think you should know I'm already obsessed with you." Ares tilts my head to the side, his lips brushing my neck as he looks at me in the mirror. "And I won't stop fucking you after you become my stepsister."

Chapter Thirty-One

OPHELIA

AFTER I CRAWL OUT OF ARES'S BED FOR THE THIRD TIME THIS week, we shower and head downstairs for breakfast. I slept less than five hours because of all the fucking we did last night. We probably kept his brothers awake with how hard his headboard banged against the wall.

My gait is slightly off from Ares and his monster cock. I'm so sore I can still feel every inch of him.

"Look at you, little dragon." He squeezes my ass as we walk toward the dining room. "Limping from taking so much dick. Do you need me to kiss you all better?"

"You did enough of that last night."

Oh, boy, did he kiss me down there. Ares eats pussy like he's going to starve to death. Even after he comes inside me, he wants to do it again. It's like some kinky obsession of his. He says I'm his woman, and he can't get enough of my pussy.

We hold hands until we get closer to the dining room, and then we have to hide our dirty secret. Our parents would have a stroke if they knew what we were doing behind closed doors.

Athena screeches when she sees her oldest son's face, which worsens by the day, the bruises darkening. "Ares, you need a doctor? Your face looks horrible."

"I'm alright, Ma." He slides my chair out from the table, gesturing for me to sit. "It looks worse than it feels. Just a few scrapes."

“A few scrapes?” Athena’s nose scrunches, and she tightens her grip on the cloth napkin. “How will I explain to my friends why my son looks like someone mugged him?”

“Just say that.” Ares sits beside me at the table. “Maybe a few of your MILF friends will feel bad for me.” He waggles his eyebrows, a mischievous smile tugging at his mouth. “I hear it’s good luck to fuck the best man at the wedding.”

I glance at Ares, but he’s staring across the table at his mother.

“Language,” Athena says in a firm tone. “I won’t have you speaking this way at my wedding.”

“I got the perfect best man speech planned.” Ares winks. Everything he does and says is laced with a hidden message. “You’ll love it, Ma. Promise. No cursing or dick jokes.”

“Ares,” she groans. “Not at my table, please.”

He gives her one of his charming smiles, enough to light up her face. There’s no denying Athena loves her sons, and they worship her in return. Her gaze flicks between the three of them before landing on me.

I force a smile.

So does she.

Something has changed with Athena since my mother’s passing. There’s a darkness that crosses over her face whenever our eyes meet. It’s like she’s hiding something she doesn’t want me to see.

“I was joking.” Ares places his hand on my knee and whispers, “This best man is only interested in fucking the maid of honor at the wedding.”

I nearly choke on my eggs.

He pats my back, his hand moving in circles. “Don’t die on me, little dragon. You’re only allowed to choke on my dick.”

I laugh, my cheeks flushed. “Stop it.”

“C’mon, baby,” he whispers. “I know you love my dick. Tonight, I want to introduce him to your pretty mouth again.”

I know what we're doing is wrong. And I can't find a single fuck to care. Ares will be my stepbrother in a few days, and then what happens?

Will he still want me?

"I'm heading to the gym to train," he tells me. "Feel like taking a drive with me?"

"Sure." I set my fork on the plate and nod. "But what about your face?" Studying his cuts and bruises, I sigh. "If you rip the stitches open, you'll need a doctor. You should take it easy today."

"Don't lecture me, woman. I'm not staying home and curling up in a ball. If I want to win the next fight, I gotta hit the gym."

"You're reckless." I shake my head. "But it's your body."

He leans down and whispers, "You love my body." His tongue grazes my ear. "If I can fuck you good when I feel like shit, imagine what I'll do to you when I heal."

My thighs clench at the promise of more.

"If you're worried about me, I'll keep it light today." He stares into my eyes like he's seconds from throwing me on the table and having his way with me in front of our parents. "And if you're a good girl, I'll fuck you in my favorite place in the world."

"And where is that?"

He slides his arm behind my back. "You'll see. But only if you come with me."

I'm curious, so why not? It's not like I have a packed schedule today. Most days are open unless I have to meet with someone who doesn't keep sex club hours.

"I have to talk to my dad about club business first. But after that, I'm all yours."

He squeezes my thigh. "Come find me when you're ready."

Chapter Thirty-Two

APOLLO

WHILE ARES KEEPS OPHELIA BUSY AT THE GYM, I SIT IN MY bedroom at the desk with Atlas. All of our hard work will pay off soon. I can feel it in my bones.

Morpheus gave Atlas information on Belen and Alexander Drakos. We've been going through it for weeks. Account numbers, passcodes, PINs, ledgers, and bank statements. Every document ever filed for their businesses, copies of deeds, trust and stock certificates, real estate documents, and Belen's current will.

Everything we need.

We comb through thousands of transactions daily and are far from uncovering new information. Only what we already know. Belen accused our father of moving money between his offshore accounts. But the shady bastard has so many of them it's hard to narrow down our search.

"Three more days until the wedding," I say to Atlas as I scroll down the page with banking transactions. "This is taking longer than I expected."

"Patience, brother." My twin pats my shoulder. "We'll get everything we deserve after Mom marries that piece of shit."

"Sure," I agree. "Mom has her part of the plan covered. But we're no closer to proving Dad's innocence until we find the smoking gun."

"I know this is important to you." Atlas sighs. "But it doesn't matter. I doubt we'll ever find anything because he set

Dad up. Why?” He shrugs. “We may never know. Only Belen can tell us that. Even if we find the evidence and jam it down Belen’s throat, he’ll never admit he was wrong.”

“Dad didn’t steal from him,” I fire back. “He wouldn’t lie to me.”

My father was exiled from the Drakos family. The falling out initially caused a rift between Cora and our mother. But good old Athena managed to get back into her graces by divorcing our dad.

She couldn’t handle temporarily losing her standing among the Beacon Bay elite. Our family fell apart because of it. And six months later, Dad was shot outside Olympus and left to die in the street. Even if Belen didn’t pull the trigger, he ordered the hit.

He’s a fucking murderer.

“Once Mom gets Belen to change the will, we can get the fuck out of here.”

Every second of our free time, we look for any unusual transfers. Anything that can prove our dad wronged Belen. I know we won’t find it because my dad didn’t do it.

“What about Ophelia?” Atlas props his elbow on the desk and glances at me curiously, tipping up his dark brows. “I know you feel something for her.”

I sneer at him. “I feel nothing.”

Lie.

I feel everything.

And I hate it.

“Even if we didn’t have our twin bond, I would know you’re lying. I can see how much you like her. And don’t even get me started on what you did with her and Ares in the bathroom.”

“Momentary lapse in judgment,” I say in my defense, and I hate that he’s right. “It won’t happen again.”

“You need her,” he presses, getting so close to me I can feel his breath on my cheek. “She can fix you, Apollo. I know it. Ophelia is the one.”

My hand trembles from the anger coursing through my veins. “The daughter of our enemy can’t fix me.”

I *am* broken.

But I don’t need my brother or anyone else to tell me that. I’m damaged on the inside. I feel the hollowness where my heart used to be. And some days, I wish I could carve out that darkness with a knife and set it on fire.

Like I don’t already know that the twisted thoughts in my head are not normal. My dreams are nightmares of a past reality that have sucked the life from my body. He doesn’t know what it’s like to have someone accidentally brush against him in a crowd, only for it to trigger a horrible flashback.

“I didn’t mean it that way. You’re not broken, Apollo.”

Atlas tries to pull me toward him, but I slide the chair, so I’m out of his grasp. Usually, I don’t mind as much if it’s one of my brothers. But I’m pissed at him for bringing up the past. He wants me to heal from my trauma. Because that means he doesn’t have to indulge my sick fantasies anymore.

Ares doesn’t mind.

He never did.

My older brother thinks he’s God’s gift to the world, and having people watch him fuck excites him. He loves being admired. Ares is the best looking out of the three of us, and he damn well knows it. Some women like it. I can see it on their faces as their eyes shift to me.

They want *me* to want *them*.

But I don’t.

It’s not about them.

It’s not about the sex.

Atlas tries to touch my hand, and I slide it off the desk. I hate the feel of anyone’s skin against mine—especially a

woman's. More than anything, I hate long fingernails on my body. I have nightmares about that sensation.

“Okay, fine.” He breathes loudly through his nose. “I get it, Apollo. I’m sorry. It fucking kills me that you’re hurting. You’re not just my brother. Our souls are linked. When you feel like shit, so do I.”

Our souls are linked.

That’s the artist speaking.

I can’t even count the number of sketches he’s drawn since I told him about that night on campus. Artists are more connected to their surroundings and can tap into other people’s energy. He knows me better than I know myself. Atlas draws what he sees—the dark clouds surrounding me.

Atlas is sensitive. Sometimes, I catch him crying because he can’t help me. So, he drinks to block out the pain. Fucks to help him forget. He puts his thoughts to paper, so I know how he’s feeling.

We all have our vices.

Ares needs to fight.

Atlas needs to draw.

And I need *them*.

I found a way to dull the nightmares, to help me regain control of my life. But by doing so, I ruined their lives. They can’t have a normal relationship with a woman because neither can I.

“I wish I could take some of the pain away for you,” Atlas says, and this time, I let his hand cover mine on the desk. “I just want you to have a normal life again.”

“I don’t think I’ll ever be the same, Atlas. That night, I lost a piece of myself. I don’t know how to get it back.”

“Think about what I’m saying.” His fingers tighten over mine, and his tattooed hand trembles. “Ophelia is different from the other girls. I can feel it. I know you can, too. You’re

drawn to her. And Ares... I think he might be in love with her.”

I laugh at the idea. “Ares is too obsessed with himself to love a woman.”

For Christ’s sake, it’s only been a month. None of us know her that well. Ophelia is hot, and I get the appeal of her big tits and ass and those plump lips I’d love to have wrapped around my dick.

I have been thinking about her since I moved into the house. But I have to keep my eyes on the prize. She’s the daughter of our enemy, and nothing will change that.

“I’ll think about it,” I tell Atlas to get him off my back. “We have more bank records to review before Ares comes home with Ophelia and wrecks our concentration.”

I scroll through the never-ending list of transactions while Atlas does the same from his laptop. Considering how much Atlas gave The Serpents for this information, they should be doing the digging for us.

Only men as feared as The Serpents can help us claim Belen’s empire without creating an uprising. The other crime families in the city will be out for blood once Belen is out of the picture.

“Apollo.” Atlas points at the screen, eyes wide. “Holy shit! I got something.”

I follow his finger, and my mouth opens in surprise. “Is that real?”

His Adam’s apple bobs. “Yep. Looks real to me.”

We stumbled on a dirty little secret that will change Ophelia’s life forever. It also screws up months of preparation.

“How did Mom not know about this?” Atlas sinks into the chair, staring at me in disbelief. “This changes everything.”

“Belen isn’t Ophelia’s biological father.”

I let the words hang in the air, too stunned to comprehend the truth. We were not expecting a wrench in our plans. All of

our hard work has gone to waste.

I slide my arm across his neck and bring him closer in a rare moment of affection. “If not for your sacrifice, we never would have found this. When this is over, you’ll get The River Styx back. I don’t care what deal we have to make with The Serpents. It’s yours.”

A smile tugs at his lips but quickly transforms into a frown. “If Belen knows Ophelia isn’t his daughter, how do we keep her from getting hurt when this is all over?” Atlas taps his fingers on my thigh and sighs. “I like her, Apollo. So does Ares. She’s not another nameless girl for us to share.”

“No,” I agree with a nod. “She’s not. You were right about her. I think she’s the one.”

The one for me.

For us.

A grin splits Atlas’s face in half. “Then we have to protect what’s ours.” He slides the chair back from the desk, chewing on his lip. “Belen is a spiteful piece of shit. He won’t give her Olympus.”

I smirk at my twin. “Then we take it from him.”

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About the Author

Jillian Frost is a dark romance author who believes even the villain deserves a happily ever after. When she's not plotting all the ways to disrupt the lives of her characters, you can usually find Jillian by the pool, soaking up the Florida sunshine.

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